Kenilworfh

Kenilworth

Sir Walter Scott (1771-1832) has been acclaimed as "The Magician of the North" and as "The Father of the Historical Novel". He lived at the same time as the poets Wordsworth and Coleridge and the novelist, Jane Austen.

As a child he was not strong, so he was sent from his parents' home in Edinburgh, to live on his grandfather's farm in the country-side. From childhood he listened eagerly to the old legends and ballads (story poems) told and sung among the people of the "Border" country, the area between Scotland and England.

Scott's student days were spent in Edinburgh, where he qualified as a lawyer. But his interest lay in writing.

He began with long narrative poems — *The Lay of the Last Minstrel, Marmion, The Lady of the Lake.* These are spirited tales in verse, telling of old castles and feuds, of battles and hunting-scenes, set in the background of the wild scenery north of the Border.

Later he turned from these stories in verse to the historical novels.

Scott was a master story-teller, and his historical novels roused interest and excitement in country after country.

His novels range over many countries and many different periods of history. Several of them centre round a ruling monarch; Mary, Queen of Scots, Elizabeth I of England, her successor, James I, Louis XI of France, Richard the Lion-hearted of a much earlier period.

In all his novels Scott presents the life of the age. His people range from the great to the humble and lowly. Giles Gosling and the Black Bear Inn have a place as well as the Queen's Court and Kenilworth Castle. We meet with pedlars and jugglers, village blacksmiths, astrologers and alchemists.

In our story of Kenilworth, an important part is played by Wayland Smith, juggler, blacksmith and former pupil of the alchemist and poisoner, Alasco.

Alasco is of special interest. He represents the alchemists of the Middle Ages, who devoted all their time and

energy to the search for a method of turning all base metals into gold. They failed in this purpose; but in the course of their laboratory experiments, they laid the foundations of modern chemistry.

In this novel, Scott presents a striking portrait of Queen Elizabeth I, in her sagacity as a ruler as well as her weakness and vanity as a woman.

Elizabeth I was one of England's greatest rulers, and guided her country through a dangerous period in its history. If she was personally attracted to the handsome and elegant Earl of Leicester, she was careful to show equal favour to his greatest rival, the Earl of Sussex, much less attractive in externals, but very valuable to the country for his services in Ireland. She kept a firm and masterful control over all the great nobles, taking strong objection to their maintenance of armed followers, since that could lead to civil strife within the land.

Moreover, the great Queen chose her counsellors very well. In ruling the country she did not take advice from any favourite noble; she was guided by wise, prudent, devoted statesmen like Lord Burleigh. In our story we see how Burleigh tactfully prevents her from revealing her strong feeling for Leicester and how he succeeds in soothing her.

But this wise monarch had her personal weaknesses as a woman — her vanity, her desire for flattery and for extravagant compliments — as seen in the famous incident of Raleigh and his cloak. The handsome nobles, Leicester and later Raleigh himself, in order to remain her favourites, must remain unmarried. Hence Leicester's reluctance to reveal his marriage.

It must be remembered that a historical novel is not the same as history. The dry facts of history must be clothed and heightened in many ways. Events may need to be brought nearer in time; a variety of characters, both major and minor, must be invented, and dramatic situations must be created.

Scott does all this with great skill — building up plot and character, background and exciting incidents. Thus he presents a true imaginative picture of Elizabethan England.

Contents

Kenilworth/iii
1 The Black Bear Inn at Cumnor/1
2 Cumnor Place/6
3 Tressilian Meets Amy Robsart/9
4 Richard Varney Visits Cumnor Place/14
5 Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester/19
6 Tressilian's Secret Departure/24
7 Wayland Smith's Story/27
8 At Lidcote Hall/30
9 Tressilian at Say's Court/34
10 Walter Raleigh Spreads His Cloak for the Queen/39
11 Preparations for the Court at Greenwich/46
12 The Queen Holds Court/48
13 Varney Makes Plans/53
14 The Pedlar at Cumnor/57
15 Amy Escapes/61
16 Amy at Kenilworth/67
17 The Queen Arrives/73
18 The Queen Meets Amy/78
19 Meeting Between Husband and Wife/85
20 Varney Tells Lies/88
21 The Meeting Between Leicester and Tressilian/94
22 The Truth, At Last!/98
23 Cumnor Place Again/106
Questions and Exercises/112

1 The Black Bear Inn at Cumnor

The village of Cumnor was situated three or four miles from Oxford. In Queen Elizabeth's reign, the village had an excellent inn called the "Black Bear". Its innkeeper was Giles Gosling, a fat man fifty years old. He and his daughter were famous for their hospitality.

The men of Cumnor were proud of their host and their host was proud of his house, his daughter and himself.

It was in the courtyard of this inn that, late one evening in the year 1575, a traveller alighted from his horse.

The landlord, Giles Gosling, brought his guest into a large low chamber where several persons were seated; some eating, some playing cards, some talking. Those who had finished their meals were arranging for their rooms for the night.

In the light of the room Giles looked carefully at the stranger and, recognizing him, exclaimed, "Mike boy—Mike! Is it really you after eighteen years, Mike Lambourne, my sister's son?"

"Yes, I am indeed your nephew, uncle," replied Mike.

Pulling out a purse full of gold, he sat down at a table and asked for food and drink.

"Kinsman Michael," said Giles Gosling, "put up your purse. My sister's son will not have to pay in my house for supper or lodging."

Old friends, some of whom had been boys together, gathered round Lambourne's table. As is natural on such occa-

mile: 1.6 km; Oxford: town in England famous for its university; Queen Elizabeth: Queen Elizabeth I of England (1558-1603); inn: a country hotel in England; hospitality: good care of guests; alighted: got off; chamber: room; recognizing: coming to know; exclaimed: cried out in surprise; Mike: short for Michael; supper: the evening meal

The village had an excellent inn called the "Black Bear".

sions, they began to talk of old times and Mike's adventures.

Asked by his uncle, how he got the gold that was in his purse, he said, "Why sirs, I have been where it grew, and was to be had for the gathering. In the New World have I been,—in the El Dorado, where small boys play with diamonds and girls thread rubies for their necklaces. The paving-stones of the streets are of pure silver."

Young Lawrence Goldthred, who was a cloth merchant, said, "How I wish I could trade in those lands!"

"Why, so you may," said Michael; "that is, if you are the same mischievous boy who was partner with me when we used to rob the Abbot's orchard. It's easy! All that you have to do is to sell your lands and house; from the money buy a ship and fill it with your merchandise. Then hire some sailors and sail for the New World!"

"Take my advice, neighbour Goldthred," said Giles Gosling. "Do not tempt the sea, for she has a bottomless appetite. She will swallow you and the ship as easily as I would a poached egg."

"But here comes the supper and I invite you all to join us in honour of my nephew's return. Please be seated, while I go and ask my guest sitting in that corner to join us. He has been here two days and has spoken not a word except to ask for his meals and to pay the bill." Saying this, Giles Gosling walked up to his solitary guest.

The guest was a man of twenty-five to thirty years of age, with dark hair and dark eyes. He was dressed simply but neatly. Having stayed at the inn for the past two days,

New World: the American continent; El Dorado: an imaginary place rich in precious metals; Abbot: head of a monastery or an abbey; orchard: a piece of ground with fruit trees; merchandise: goods bought and sold; has a bottomless appetite: is always hungry; poached egg: egg broken and cooked in boiling water; solitary; lonely, alone, without companions

he had roused the curiosity of the villagers. They wanted to know who he was and the business that had brought him to Cumnor.

Honest Giles with great courtesy requested his guest to join them at the supper which he was giving in honour of his nephew's return.

The stranger at first shook his head as if declining the invitation; but Giles insisted.

"I am an old man and will speak out," said Giles. "This melancholy look you have, does not suit you. Cheer up, sir!". Pointing to the company at the table he continued, "Here are a set of good fellows willing to be merry; do not frown on them."

"You speak well, my friend," said the stranger and he rose to join the company.

On the way to the table, Giles asked, "And now sir, by what name shall I introduce you to these young men?"

"You may call me Tressilian."

Tressilian was brought to the table and introduced to the company. Lambourne was recalling their old times together in the village and asking his friends about those who were not present.

After some time Mike Lambourne said, "Where is Tony Foster?"

"Oh, Anthony Foster lives and prospers," replied the innkeeper. "He was married, but his wife is dead. He has a daughter, who lives with him."

"Do you remember Cumnor Place." asked Goldthred, "the old house inside the churchyard?"

"Do you mean the old Abbot's residence where I robbed the orchard three times?" inquired Michael Lambourne.

"Ah, that was a long time ago! Now Anthony Foster lives

courtesy: politeness; declining: refusing, not accepting; melancholy: sad; Tony: short for Anthony; prospers: is doing well, is successful

there. These days he thinks himself too superior to mix with poor villagers like us!" remarked Giles.

"Nay," said the cloth merchant, "it's not just pride that keeps him away. He has a fair lady there and he does not want any of us, humble villagers, to see her."

"Why?" asked Tressilian joining in the conversation for the first time.

"Oh, I don't know," answered the innkeeper. "Men say she is as beautiful as an angel. No one knows where she comes from and why she is so closely confined in the house For my part, I have not seen her. I think you have, Master Goldthred, haven't you?"

"That I have," said the cloth merchant. "One day, as I was riding back from Abingdon, I took the path through the Park. As I passed close to the house, at a large window I saw a very beautiful woman."

"May I ask you to describe her, sir?" said Tressilian.

"O sir," replied Goldthred, "she was dressed in fine silk clothes with gold and silver lace, as is worn by ladies of high rank."

'I did not ask you for a description of her clothes, sir," said Tressilian.

"I had little time to look at her, for suddenly out of the house came Tony Foster with a cudgel in his hand—"

"And broke your head," said Michael Lambourne with a laugh.

"No, no—there was no breaking of heads! He asked me rudely why I had not taken the public road. I wanted to knock him down; but out of respect for the lady, I said nothing and quietly moved on."

"Oh, you are a coward!" said Lambourne. "What a chance

nay: no; humble: of low rank or position; closely confined: carefully shut in; Abingdon: a town near Cumnor; cudgel: a short stick or a club

you missed! I'll show you. I'll go up to Cumnor Place tomorrow and force Tony Foster to introduce me to his fair guest."

Tressilian then asked Lambourne if he could go with him. Lambourne agreed; so it was decided that they should both go to Cumnor Place the next morning.

The party then broke up. The villagers returned home and the guests retired to their rooms for the night.

2 Cumnor Place

The next morning Tressilian found himself alone at breakfast, and spoke to Giles Gosling. "This Foster, who or what is he, and why does he make such a mystery of the lady in his house?" he asked.

"Truly, I can add little to what you heard last night. He was in the service of the Abbot. After the Abbot's death, he lives as master of the manor house at Cumnor Place. Above all he was poor and is now a rich man. People talk of rooms in the old house furnished well enough to serve the Queen! Some men think he found a treasure in the orchard; some say, he cheated the Abbot. Rich, however, he is! God and his conscience and perhaps the devil, only know how he got this wealth. He does not mix with the villagers or his old friends any more."

Just as Tressilian was finishing his breakfast, Lambourne entered the room. He had taken the trouble to dress carefully in clothes of the latest fashion.

Tressilian asked him if he was going to visit Tony Foster as he had planned the previous evening.

"Ay, sir," was the reply. "And you; are you going to

manor house: house on lands belonging to an English nobleman; conscience: the feeling inside ourselves that tells us when we are doing right or wrong; ay: yes

accompany me?"

"I propose to do that, if you will permit me."

Without further delay the two set out for Anthony Foster's house.

The village of Cumnor is built on a hill. In a wooded park close to the village, was the old house now occupied by Anthony Foster. The park was full of large oak trees, which were very old and spread out their branches over the high wall surrounding the place. The huge trees gave the place a melancholy, secluded and monastic appearance. The entrance to the park lay through a gateway in the outer wall. The doors of this gateway were made of thick wood, studded with nails.

Hoping that the gate was not locked, Lambourne gave it a push. As the heavy oak door slowly opened on its rusty hinges, Lambourne remarked, "The door stands invitingly open, and here we enter a forbidden place." With these words the two walked in.

They stood now in an avenue overshadowed by the large oak trees already mentioned. The whole place looked so neglected and gloomy that Lambourne exclaimed, "This wood is as dark as a wolf's mouth."

They walked together, slowly along the uneven and lonely path and entered the large orchard which surrounded the house. The orchard too was neglected and the trees overgrown. Nearer the house there were flower gardens, but with no flowers in them. The two visitors crossed the garden and found themselves within a few steps of the door leading to the mansion.

After they had knocked several times an old, sour-faced

accompany: go with; secluded: cut off from others; monastic: like a monastery, where monks live by themselves shut away from ordinary folk; invitingly: as if asking them to go in; avenue: a road with trees on both sides; neglected: given no care; mansion: a large stately house

servant opened a small square hole in the door and looked at them. He asked what they wanted.

"To speak to Master Foster immediately on important business of the state," answered Lambourne.

As the servant went off with the message, Tressilian whispered to his companion, "I don't think it's going to be very easy."

In a short time the servant returned and opened the door. They were admitted, through an archway into a square courtyard surrounded by buildings. They crossed this courtyard and the servant opened another door admitting them into a parlour.

After some time, Anthony Foster entered. He was a strongly built man of middle height, ugly to look at and with untidy hair.

As he entered the room, he looked at the visitors closely. Then, in a low voice asked, "I pray you, gentlemen, to tell me the cause of this visit." He turned to Tressilian as if expecting an answer from him.

Michael replied to him. He spoke as if he was talking to an old friend and was sure of being well received.

"Ha! my dear friend, Tony Foster!" he said, and seizing his unwilling hand began to shake it. "How have you been all these years? — What, have you altogether forgotten your friend and playfellow, Michael Lambourne?"

"Michael Lambourne!" said Foster, looking at him: "are you the same Michael Lambourne, the gambler and thief, who had to leave the village?"

"Ay; sure as you are the same wicked Anthony Foster!" replied Lambourne.

" 'Tis well," said the host sullenly; "and what does Michael Lambourne expect from his visit here?"

Master: used then, where today we use Mister (Mr.); parlour: sitting-room for the family in a house; sullenly: in a bad temper

"I expect a better welcome, I think."

Foster looked at him, then turned and walked up and down the room twice, as if deep in thought. Then suddenly, he came to Lambourne and said, "Do not be angry with me, good Mike." Turning to Tressilian he asked, "Who is this gentleman?"

"Know Master Tressilian," said Lambourne in reply to Foster's question. "Know him and honour him, for he is a gentleman."

Foster now turned to Mike and said, "I request you to come with me to another room. What I have to say to you is for your private ears only."

Turning to Tressilian he said, "I pray you, sir, wait for us in this room. Please do not leave it, as there are others in the house who would be alarmed at the sight of a stranger."

Tressilian agreed and the two old friends left the parlour.

3 Tressilian Meets Amy Robsart

The room into which the master of Cumnor Place conducted his visitor had been the library of the monastery, where the monks used to write all their books. The room was no longer used and was badly in need of repairs.

Without wasting much time Foster said, "Let us come to the point. Tell me in a few words. What is your business with me, and with what hopes have you come here?"

"The hope of bettering myself, to be sure," answered Lambourne. "Look; this purse is all that is left of the gold I had brought back with me. You are well established here and, according to the villagers, have a powerful friend to protect you. Now, I know that such protection is given only for some return. You must have to serve your master in some way, and in this I propose to help you."

conducted: took, led

"But I don't need any help, Mike," said Foster. "Besides, I do not think you have any right to interfere in my private affairs."

"Working together we shall drive the world before us. If you spurn my offer, then I must work against you. I assure you, that you won't like that! I know too much about your past life."

"Well," said Foster, "you give me no choice. I would rather be your friend than your enemy. You are right; I can recommend you to the service of a nobleman, who has enough means to make not only the two of us, but more besides, rich."

"What is the name of this nobleman in whose service I am to be employed?" asked Lambourne.

At this moment their conversation was interrupted by a scream from the parlour.

"By the Holy Cross!" cried out Antony Foster. "I am a ruined man!" So saying, he rushed into the parlour, followed by Lambourne.

To explain the cause of the scream, which brought Foster rushing to the parlour, we must go back a little in our story.

Tressilian, who had been left alone by Mike and Foster, spent some time lost in thought. He was thinking of Amy Robsart; he had once loved her and was still devoted to her. It was this devotion that had brought him to Cumnor village in search of her.

A slight noise in the apartment disturbed him and made him look round. A beautiful young woman, richly dressed, had just entered the parlour from a side door. Tressilian instantly recognized her. His first impulse was to draw his

spurn: refuse; would rather: prefer to be, like to be; recommend: speak well of; means: money, wealth; interrupted: cut off, broken; was devoted to her: gave all his time, attention and care to her; apartment: room

cloak over his face, but the young lady ran to him. She pulled at the cloak and said playfully, "No, my sweet friend, after I have waited for you so long, do not try to hide yourself."

"Alas, Amy!" said Tressilian in a low, sad voice, as he allowed her to pull off the cloak.

Hearing his voice, she fell back, turning as pale as death. She put her hands before her face.

"Amy, do not fear me," said Tressilian.

"Why should I fear you?" said the lady angrily, withdrawing her hands from her face, which had now turned crimson. "Why should I fear you, Mr. Tressilian? Why have you come into my house uninvited, sir?

"Your house, Amy? Alas! Is a prison your dwelling? – A prison guarded by a wretched, mean man!" said Tressilian.

"This house is mine," said Amy, "mine, while I choose to live in it. If it is my pleasure to live in seclusion, why should anyone contradict me?"

"Your father, maiden," answered Tressilian. "Your broken-hearted father, who has sent me in search of you. Here is his letter. After you ran away from home, he has been ill in body and mind."

"Is my father ill, then?" asked Amy.

"Yes, very ill and wants you to return home instantly. I shall make immediate preparations if you agree," said Tressilian.

"Tressilian," answered Amy, "I cannot: I dare not leave this place. Go back to my father. Tell him I shall obtain leave to see him within twelve hours. Go back, Tressilian, and tell my father. I am well and happy. I will return to him in such a manner, that all grief shall be forgotten."

"Do not delay, but come, while your father lives," said Tressilian once again.

cloak: a loose outer garment without sleeves; contradict: oppose

"Have I not already said that I will come?" was Amy's impatient answer. "I will surely come to my father as soon as I get the permission."

"Permission? Permission to visit your sick father on his sick bed — perhaps his death bed! And permission from whom? — From the villain who abused the hospitality given to him, and stole you from your father's roof?" said Tressilian angrily.

"Do not slander him, Tressilian. You are unworthy of him. He is a great and noble person and holds high rank at court. Go, leave me. Take my message to my father, and when he next sends a messenger to me, let him choose a more welcome person."

"Amy," said Tressilian calmly, "before I go just tell me one thing — This high rank you speak of, do you share it with him, and does he claim a husband's right to control your actions?"

"Stop your base, unmannered tongue," said Amy. "I will answer no more questions."

"You have said enough," said Tressilian. "However, I have your father's authority to force you to return, Amy." With these words, he moved towards her and stretched his arm as if to hold her. It was then that Amy stepped back and screamed.

The scream, as we already know, brought Foster rushing into the room followed by Lambourne.

"What have we here?" exclaimed Foster. Then, addressing the lady, he said, "Madam, why are you here? You are not supposed to come here. Please return to your rooms."

Turning to Tressilian he said, "And you friend, whoever

villain: a wicked person, a rascal; abused: made a bad or wrong use of; hospitality: kindness shown to a guest in one's home; slander: make false statements against a person; base: dishonourable

you may be, leave this house at once — Out with you before I draw my dagger."

He was so angry, that he turned to Lambourne and ordering him said, "Draw, Mike, and rid us of this knave!"

"Not I," returned Lambourne. "He came here with me and he is safe from me, at least, till we meet again."

To Tressilian, Lambourne said, "Listen, friend, leave immediately. Go — Depart!"

Tressilian ignored both the men and spoke to Amy. "Fare you well, madam. Your father will surely die when he hears the news that I am taking back to him." With these words he walked out of the house.

Foster asked Mike to follow Tressilian and see that he left the grounds of Cumnor Place immediately.

Once out of the house, Tressilian took the first path he thought would take him to the public road, and out of Cumnor Place. In his haste and distress of mind, however, he chose a wrong path. It took him to the outer wall, where there was a door. The door led to the open country and not to the road.

Just as he approached the door, it was opened from the outside and a man on horseback wearing a riding cloak and a hat, stood in front of him. Both recognized each other at once and called out — "Varney!" "Tressilian!"

When the moment of surprise was over, the stranger asked in a stern voice, "What are you doing here? Your presence in this place is neither expected nor desired."

"Varney," replied Tressilian, "Why are you here? Have you come to receive your just punishment from an honest man? — Draw, dog, and defend yourself!"

Tressilian drew his sword as he spoke. Varney, before he drew his own sword, said, "I swear to you most solemnly that I have in no way harmed Mistress Amy Robsart."

draw: draw your sword; ignored: took no notice of

"I do not believe you," replied Tressilian impatiently.

Both drew their swords now and the fight began. For some time the duel continued, both fighting skilfully and well. Then, Varney slipped and fell. His sword flew out of his hand. Before he could rise, his opponent was ready to strike him down. But just at that moment, Lambourne, who had been searching for Tressilian, appeared on the scene. He saw what was happening and caught Tressilian's arm just as he was about to strike Varney. This saved Varney's life.

Tressilian, seeing that they could not now finish the fight, left the grounds, and returned to the Black Bear.

Varney got up, took up his sword and asked Lambourne, "Are you a friend of Foster, good fellow?"

"Yes, Foster and I are sworn friends," said Lambourne.

He then threw some gold pieces to Lambourne and said, "Follow him and find out where he is going. Return with the information to the house; I shall be waiting there for you."

4 Richard Varney Visits Cumnor Place

Anthony Foster was still pleading with Amy to return to her rooms.

"I pray you go to your rooms, my lady," he repeated again and again.

"I do not move at your command, sir," was her firm answer.

"Nay, but you must, fair lady — you must go to your rooms," he was insisting, when from the outside a whistle was heard.

"There is my lord's signal," cried Foster, looking very upset. "What shall I tell him; I do not know."

duel: fight between two persons, usually with swords or pistols; pray: request, ask humbly

"Peace, Sir! Go and open the door to your master," ordered Amy. Saying this, she herself rushed forward calling out, "My lord! My dear lord!" But on seeing the person who entered, she said, with disappointment, "Pooh! It's only Richard Varney."

On entering the room, Varney saluted the lady and told her that he had a message from his lordship. His lordship intended to visit her today. He handed her a small packet wrapped in scarlet silk, saying that his lordship had sent it.

Amy called to her maid, "Janet, Janet," and started opening the parcel.

The pretty maid, Janet, who was Anthony Foster's daughter, ran into the room. Just then her mistress pulled out from the packet a necklace of beautiful pearls and a letter. The lady looked at the pearls and gave the necklace to Janet while she read the letter. On finishing the letter, she told Janet, "My lord is coming here tonight. Come, we must prepare for his visit." So saying, she left the room followed by Janet.

As soon as Varney found himself alone with Foster, he asked, "Why was Tressilian at the side entrance?"

"Tressilian?" answered Foster taken by surprise, "I have never heard of that name!"

"Why, he is the very person whom our lady's father, Sir Hugh Robsart, wanted her to marry. She ran away and secretly married my lord, Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester. It is very important that the marriage be kept secret. Luckily, Tressilian knows nothing of my lord. He thinks he has only me to deal with. — But how in the devil's name did he come here?"

"Why, with Mike Lambourne," replied Foster, "if you must know."

peace: be quiet; scarlet: bright red colour; Leicester: (pronounced Les-ter); secret: kept from knowledge of others

"And who is Mike Lambourne?" asked Varney.

"You asked me to look out for a fit person who could be employed in our master's service. Mike Lambourne is such a person. Tressilian came with him; and while I was talking to Lambourne in the old library, he managed to see our lady just for a very short time."

Hearing this Varney said, "We are both ruined! The lady is lonely here and Tressilian may have persuaded her to return to her father's house."

"No fear of that, my master," said Foster. "I heard her, and she is in no mood for that."

"That is good," said Varney much relieved. "But the country must be rid of Tressilian, now that he knows where our lady is. I would have got rid of him myself this morning, if I had not slipped and fallen. In truth, that friend of yours came to my help and saved my life. I've sent him to follow Tressilian and find out where he goes. Tressilian's actions can easily destroy us both.

"Foster, you must understand that for the present, my lord's marriage must be kept a secret. Our gracious Queen, who is herself not married, does not like the young lords at court to marry. As soon as they get married and she comes to know of it, she stops showing them her favours. Just now, my Lord of Leicester is a great favourite of Elizabeth; but the Earl of Sussex is still his greatest rival. In a short time, I am sure, Leicester will rise to the highest position, and if *he* rises, *we* benefit."

Just then there was a knock at the door. Foster went to see who it was, and said, "It is Michael Lambourne."

ruined: destroyed, in serious trouble; persuaded: by reasoning to get somebody to do something; relieved: comforted, feeling less worry; favours: advantages; favourite: a person preferred above all others; rival: a person who wants the same thing; benefit: get some advantage

"Oh, admit him," said Varney, "but not here. I will see him in the library." As he went out he asked Foster, "Have all the western rooms been redecorated as his lordship desired? Has all the furniture which came from London been arranged to suit my lord's tastes?"

"Yes, the rooms look fit to serve a King! Mistress Amy is very proud of them," said Foster.

The rooms just mentioned were four in number and facing west. A staircase led to these rooms. The first was a small room into which the staircase opened. Next to it, there was a dining-room with a large table in the centre. This was followed by the sitting-room, and finally, the bedroom. Skilled workmen had come from London to carry out the redecorations. The broken-down rooms of the old monastery had been changed into rooms of great splendour. They could now be compared with rooms in a royal palace. Besides the fine furniture, there were lamps of silver, velvet curtains of different colours in each room, and beautiful carpets and cushions. The work had been carried out in great secrecy, and the people of Cumnor knew nothing about it.

Countess Amy, for that was the rank to which her secret marriage had raised her, was justly proud of these rooms. To her they were a proof of her husband's great love and devotion. Her husband who was then England's proudest Earl! She now walked through the rooms to see that everything was ready for her lord's visit. In the first room, she stood in the middle of the room and looking round, cried out, "Oh, Janet, how beautiful are these curtains!" In the next room she picked up a gold plate and said, "Look at this gold plate; how skilfully it is carved!"

admit: take in, let in; redecorated: newly painted, and new curtains and furniture placed; splendour: great beauty; Countess: wife of an Earl; Earl: third rank in the British aristocracy coming after Duke and Marquis

Then as they finished going round the rooms, she said, "Oh, Janet, how much more delightful is the thought that all these lovely things have been collected by my lord to show his love for me!"

Amy now returned to the sitting-room and sat down on a pile of cushions. "I must see your father, Janet, before my lord arrives — and Master Varney too. Call them here."

Janet Foster immediately went to call both the men; and Varney, followed by Foster, entered the sitting room. After both had greeted the lady, Varney asked permission to speak to her privately.

As soon as the father and daughter had left the room, Varney said, "Lady, you have seen Tressilian today."

"I have, sir, and how does it concern you?" answered the lady sharply.

"It does not concern me, lady," he replied humbly. "But do you think it will please your lord?"

"And why should it not? — To me alone was Tressilian's visit painful, because he brought news of my father's illness."

"Of your father's illness, madam?" asked Varney. "I am sure the illness must have been very sudden, or Tressilian has made up the story. At my lord's command, I had sent a man to your father and he had found him on the hunting field in very good health."

"You do Tressilian great injustice, Master Varney," was the lady's angry answer. "He is a very honest man to whom falsehood is hateful. My father may have been slightly ill and Tressilian's great love for him may have led him to exaggerate. I hope your better news is the truer."

"Will your ladyship tell your husband of Tressilian's

privately: alone, without anyone else being, present; humbly: meekly, quietly; hunting field: a field where men collect on horseback with dogs to run after and kill a fox or a rabbit — a sport that is still carried on by the rich in England; exaggerate: make something seem larger, better or worse than it really is

visit?" asked Varney.

"Yes, certainly; it will be the first thing I tell him, along with every word he said to me and what I said to him."

"You will, of course, do as you think best, my lady. But do you realize how the news will upset your lord? He has taken such great trouble to keep your place of retirement secret from all. He is going to be very worried if he learns that Tressilian has discovered it."

"I think you exaggerate. Let us drop the subject," was Amy's stern reply. She got up to leave the room, but suddenly stood still as if listening carefully. Then she cried out, "He comes! He comes!" With these words, she was about to run out, when Varney stopped her.

Varney feared that he had gone too far in asking Amy to keep Tressilian's visit a secret from the Earl. If the Earl got to know, his own position would be in danger. He therefore stood at the door and said, "I beg of you, that what I have spoken will not be repeated to my lord."

Amy impatiently agreed and asked him to move away. At that very moment the door flew open and a tall man in a dark riding-cloak entered the apartment.

5 Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester

Amy ran to her lord as he entered and cried out, "At last you have come!"

After greeting each other, Amy helped the Earl to remove his cloak, saying, "Have you kept your promise? Have you come dressed as the great Earl?"

When the cloak fell to the ground Amy stood back to admire her lord.

The Earl smiled and said, "You are just like the rest of the world, Amy; the medals and decorations are more to

discovered: found out; decorations: medals, ribbons, etc. given and worn as an honour

them than the man they adorn."

"Do not think Amy can love you more in this glorious dress. Remember, I first gave my heart to you in the woods of Devon, when you always wore your dull brown cloak!" she was quick to answer.

The Earl now sat down in a chair and Amy drew up a stool and sat opposite him. She admired all the medals and decorations and asked Dudley to tell her what each was and why the Queen had given it to him. When he had told her all she wanted to know, he said, "Well my loveliest, I hope you are satisfied."

"One wish satisfied usually gives rise to a new one," said Amy.

"What is it?" asked her fond husband.

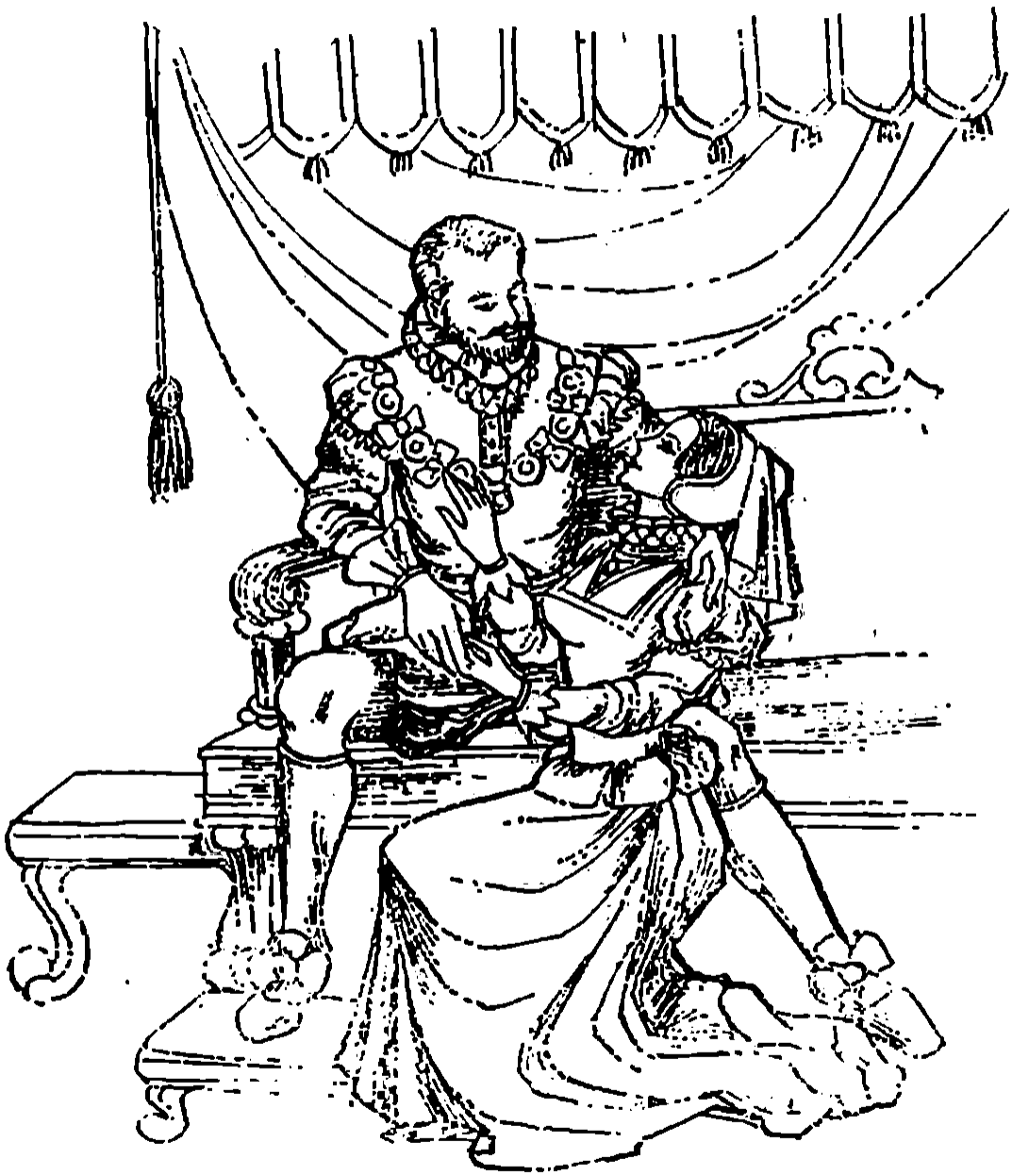
"To go with you, one day soon, to your castle and take my place as the wife of England's noblest Earl!"

"Yes Amy, one day this shall surely happen; and believe me you cannot wish for that day more than I do! But it is not possible yet. For the present we must be satisfied with these brief secret meetings. This is all I can do at the moment," he said sadly.

"But why can it not be? Why can it not immediately take place?" urged the Countess.

The Earl looked sad and worried. "Amy," he said, "you do not understand my position at court. To declare my marriage just now, is to bring about my own ruin! But believe me, I shall soon reach a position at court, when I can do justice to you by declaring our marriage. Now do not spoil the pleasure of the present meeting by thinking of something that is not possible just now."

adorn: add beauty or distinction to; Devon: town in South-West of England in Devonshire; fond husband: husband who loved her very much; brief: lasting only for a short time; declare: make known



Amy admired all the medals and decorations

"Are you satisfied with the way the rooms have been decorated and with everything here?"

"O, I have nothing to complain of," answered the lady. "I have, however, a secret to tell you and to ask a favour."

"Let both wait till tomorrow. I can see that our supper is ready. I have ridden far today and am hungry," said the Earl.

After supper they retired for the night, and all was silent and peaceful at Cumnor Place.

The next morning, having risen early, the Earl went into the dressing-room where Varney was waiting for his master.

"Find me very simple clothes to wear, this morning; and put away all those medals and decorations. We must take them back with us," said the Earl.

As Varney was helping his master to dress, the Earl said, "Varney, Countess Amy is so sad and lonely here that I have almost made up my mind to retire from court. I have a large estate and a high rank. What more do I want!"

"If your lordship is going to be happy in the company of the lovely Countess, I have nothing more to say. But I want you to give the matter careful thought. Do not lightly throw away everything for which you have worked so hard!"

After he had spoken Varney waited for a reply from the Earl; but the Earl remained silent, lost in thought.

Varney then boldly continued, "My lord, let your humble servant tell you what will happen if you retire from court. Her Majesty, the Queen, will be very angry and your enemies at court will laugh at you! Who will then take your place at court? — Why, your *rival*, the Earl of Sussex! Surely you are not going to like that!"

"Stop, Varney! No more of this!" said the Earl. "I tell you that I have not made up my mind. I shall give careful thought to the matter before I decide."

As the Earl finished dressing, Varney told him about Michael Lambourne, whom he wanted to employ in the

Earl's service. They agreed upon this. The Earl then quickly left the dressing-room. He went to look for Amy to say good-bye to her. He found her near the stairs, waiting for him and looking very sad.

"God be with you, my dearest," he said. "The sun has already risen and I dare not wait. I should have left much earlier. The secret you mentioned last night and the favour you want to ask, let them both wait for my next visit." So saying he went down the steps quickly. At the bottom of the stairs he took his cloak and hat from Varney. He wrapped the cloak round his body and pulled the hat down to hide his face. He then walked to where Anthony Foster was waiting with his horse. There was another horse ready for Varney.

Both rode to the side gate in the wall. The Earl told Varney, "I have decided to ride alone to the Royal Park at Woodstock without further delay, where the Queen's work awaits me." Then with a smile he continued, "Don't forget that at this very moment, I am supposed to be asleep in that old house! You ride to the Black Bear Inn and bring Michael Lambourne with you. I shall wait for you at Woodstock." So saying, he rode away.

As soon as Varney found Lambourne at the Black Bear, he asked him about Tressilian.

"He was here at supper time and I kept a careful watch over him all the time. When he left the dining room, I followed him and saw him go into the bedroom. In the morning, he had just disappeared! No one knows where he has gone."

Varney was not pleased with this answer; but there was

dare not. cannot take the risk; Royal Park at Woodstock: a very old possession of the British sovereign at Woodstock, a small town near Oxford. In Elizabeth I's reign the old mansion was badly neglected as the Queen no longer visited the place.
await: to wait for

nothing he could do about it. He now questioned Michael Lambourne on his past life and told him what he would be expected to do in the service of the Earl. Lambourne was also told, "Always remember that though you will be in the service of the Earl, you will take all orders from me. I am the Earl's Master of the Horse."

Lambourne was satisfied with the terms offered to him and agreed to join the Earl's service. Riding fast, they reached Woodstock in good time. They galloped into the courtyard of the ancient mansion and dismounted.

Varney closely followed by Lambourne entered the hall where the villagers were waiting for Robert Dudley, the Earl of Leicester.

As soon as the Earl heard of Varney's arrival, he came down and spoke to the villagers. He heard their grievances and then assured them that the Queen would soon honour them with a visit and help to improve the wool trade of Woodstock. After this, without further delay, the Earl with his men returned to court.

As they left the town, people shouted, "Long live Queen Elizabeth and the noble Earl of Leicester."

6 Tressilian's Secret Departure

After his meeting with Varney, Tressilian returned to the Black Bear Inn. He asked the landlord for pen and ink and went into his room, where he shut himself up for the rest of the day.

In the evening he went down to the dining-room, where he found Lambourne. Lambourne tried to talk to him like

Master of the Horse: person in charge of the house and the servants; terms: conditions regarding salary, etc.; ancient: very old; dismounted: got off the horse; grievances: complaints; wool trade: the wool trade was important in those days.

an old friend, but Tressilian snubbed him. Michael then went into a corner of the room and sat there, closely watching Tressilian.

After supper, Tressilian returned to his room for the night.

He had not been in bed very long, when he heard someone opening his door. A person carrying a dim light had entered his room. Tressilian sprang out of bed and took up his sword.

At that moment a soft voice said, "Do not be too hasty with your sword, Master Tressilian—It is I, your host, Giles Gosling." Saying this, he uncovered the light.

"What is the meaning of this, my host?" asked Tressilian angrily.

"Master Tressilian, I do not wish to interfere in your affairs. But, I have noticed a few things since this morning and have come to warn you.

"When you returned from Cumnor Place you looked very angry. I think you have quarrelled or fought with either my nephew or someone else. All day, my no-good nephew was making inquiries about you. Then at supper, he was watching you as closely as a cat watches a mouse. I do not like all this, and have come to tell you that Cumnor is no longer a safe place for you. Please remember, Anthony Foster is a very dangerous man and has a powerful master at court to protect him."

"You are an honest man, my host," said Tressilian after some thought, "and I shall talk to you frankly. Both Anthony Foster and your nephew are agents working for a more powerful villain than themselves."

"You mean Richard Varney, do you not?" said the land-

snubbed: behaved coldly; dim: not bright; sprang: got up very quickly: interfere: get mixed up with another person's affairs when not asked; frankly: openly; agents: persons who act for others

lord. "He was at Cumnor Place today. He may have tried to come very secretly, but he was seen by someone who told me."

"I mean the same person," said Tressilian.

"Then for God's sake, Master Tressilian," said Gosling, "be very careful! This Varney is Anthony Foster's protector. He is a very powerful man and can do anything he likes. He, in turn, has the protection of the Earl of Leicester, who as we all know, is very powerful at court. So, now you see why I ask you to be careful."

Finding an honest friend, Tressilian told him Amy Robsart's story. His own father and Sir Hugh Robsart, Amy's father, had been good friends from their young days. They lived close to each other; and when Tressilian's father died. Sir Hugh was very good to him. He was constantly at the Robsarts' house. As Amy grew up from a child to a very beautiful woman, he grew to love her. Amy's father was very eager that they should be married. Amy did not love Tressilian, and asked her father for more time.

At this stage, Varney, who was a distant relative of Sir Hugh Robsart, came to live in the neighbourhood. In a short time he became very friendly with Sir Hugh and was often in their house.

"I am sure this brought trouble and misfortune," said Giles, shaking his head.

"True, I did not like him or his visits; but what could I do? I was helpless!" said Tressilian. "Amy at first showed open dislike of Varney. But as time passed I saw that some secret agreement had developed between them. I also suspected that they met in private. Then suddenly, one day, Amy disappeared from her father's house. Varney left the neighbourhood at the same time. Today, I saw them both

constantly: very often; stage: time; neighbourhood: nearby, close by; had developed: had grown, arisen

—Amy living in that wretched, miserable place and Varney coming to see her by a secret entrance."

"And what do you want to do now?" asked Giles Gosling.

"I shall go to Sir Hugh Robsart. The poor father is very worried. I shall tell him of my meeting with Amy, and advise him to appeal to the Queen. I shall leave early tomorrow morning, my host," said Tressilian.

"Nay, leave tonight, sir," said the landlord. "It will be safer for you to get out of Cumnor in the dark. Your horse is ready and here is your bill."

Tressilian agreed to do what his landlord suggested and was soon ready. With the help of the dim lantern, Giles Gosling took him to a corner of the yard, where he had kept Tressilian's horse ready.

Before leaving, Tressilian asked Gosling to keep his eyes and ears open to what happened at Cumnor Place. After some time he would send a messenger to whom Giles could give all the information he had collected. This Giles agreed to do. He then opened a side-gate and said farewell to his guest.

7 Wayland Smith's Story

Tressilian was told by Giles Gosling to avoid the main road. This he did and travelled through by-lanes. However, he must have lost his way in the dark; for with morning light, he saw that he had not gone very far. Besides, on the rough country roads, his poor horse had lost a shoe. So, before going further he had to find a blacksmith, who would shoe his horse.

He dismounted and led his horse to a small village that he could see in the distance. At the village, after many inquiries and some delay, a village lad, named Dickie Sludge,

farewell: good-bye; **besides:** in addition

was called. He was told to take Tressilian to Wayland Smith, the blacksmith.

The blacksmith lived by himself, some distance away. He was good at his work and gave a new shoe to Tressilian's horse without much delay.

After the work was completed, Wayland Smith, calling Tressilian by name, said, "We have met before, but I do not expect you to remember me."

He then told Tressilian, how three years ago on a feast day, he had come to Devonshire as a travelling juggler.

Tressilian now remembered the man and in surprise said, "In those days you were a merry fellow, who could amuse people with songs, story-telling and by your juggling tricks. Why do I now find you here in this lonely place and carrying on a blacksmith's trade?"

"My story is not long," said Wayland Smith, "but, your honour, you had better sit down while I tell it."

"I have very little time," said Tressilian, "so please be quick."

"Oh, you will not regret the delay," said Wayland. "While I am telling you my story, your horse is feeding outside and he will be fitter for the journey."

Wayland Smith then began his story—"I was brought up to be a blacksmith and was good at my work. After some years I grew tired of being a blacksmith and went out into the world. Soon, I met a well-known juggler, who wanted an assistant. I worked with him for six years and became master of my trade. It was at this time that I came to Sir Hugh Robsart's house and performed in your worship's presence.

"For some years I continued to work as a juggler. I per-

juggler: a man who performs tricks to amuse people; honour: word showing respect, good opinion, regard; regret: be sorry for; worship: word

formed in theatres as well as in noblemen's halls, till again, I grew tired of being a juggler and gave it up."

"Well, friend," said Tressilian, "and what did you do after that?"

"I became," said the smith, "half partner, half servant to a physician."

"In other words you worked with a quack," remarked Tressilian with a smile.

"Something more than that, let me hope, my good Master Tressilian," replied Wayland. "I used simple medicine that did good to people. It was my master, Doctor Doboobie, who was very ambitious. He dealt in more dangerous work. He used to shut himself up for long hours in his laboratory. There, he practised sorcery and magic. He was also trying to change baser metals into gold! Then one day he suddenly disappeared.

"By that time, I too was tired of medicine and was glad to return to the honest hammer and anvil. But this, as you must have noticed, is a miserable place. If I can find a gentleman of means to employ me, I shall leave this place."

After some further talk Tressilian found out that Wayland was very familiar with the countryside and knew all the roads in that part of the country. He also had a good horse left by his previous master. So, Tressilian was willing to employ him. The blacksmith was very happy to be in Tressilian's service and was ready to leave with his master in a short time.

Without further delay, they journeyed towards Devonshire,

physician: a person qualified to practise medicine, a doctor; quack: a person practising medicine without being qualified; sorcery: witchcraft, practice of magic with the help of evil spirits; baser metals: cheaper metals; gentleman of means: person with pro-

and in three days they arrived at Sir Hugh Robsart's house, Lidcote Hall.

8 At Lidcote Hall

Lidcote Hall had belonged to the Robsart family for many many years. The old mansion was a large, low building surrounded by a deep moat. There was a drawbridge over the moat. An octagonal tower guarded the drawbridge and the road leading to it.

When Edmund Tressilian and his companion arrived, the drawbridge was down and the gate half open. Tressilian hastily rode over the bridge and into the courtyard. He called out to the servants by their names.

Will Badger, Sir Hugh's old and favourite servant, came after some time and was very happy to see Tressilian.

"Master Tressilian, I am very glad you have come," he said. "Perhaps you may be able to do some good to Sir Hugh."

"Is Sir Hugh then seriously ill?" asked Tressilian.

"Not in body, but certainly in mind. He eats and drinks what we give him; but he does not sleep and just sits dazed. He does not take any interest in things around him. I can do nothing for him!" replied Badger sadly with a sigh.

"You can tell me the rest of the story when we go in, Will," said Tressilian. "In the meantime let this person be taken to the servants' quarters and see that he is treated with respect." Saying this Tressilian entered the parlour.

Will Badger returned and told Tressilian all that had happened at Lidcote Hall while he was away. Tressilian heard

moat: wide ditch filled with water round a castle; drawbridge: a bridge which can be pulled up; octagonal: with eight sides; dazed: not knowing what is happening around him; sigh: a deep breath of sadness; quarters: place to live

the servant's story and then said with a heavy heart, "God must help us. It seems there is no help in man!"

"Then you bring us no news of young Mistress Amy? All's over and lost now," said the faithful servant.

Another servant now entered the parlour and made signs to Tressilian to follow him. Tressilian was taken to a large room where he found Sir Hugh seated in a large, comfortable chair. Near him was the clergyman reading from the Bible. Sir Hugh slowly turned to the visitor and sighed heavily. Then recognizing Tressilian, he opened his arms without saying a word. Tressilian threw himself into the welcoming arms of the old man and embraced him.

"There is something left to live for yet," said the old man, weeping silently, as the tears ran down his sunburnt cheeks and long white beard.

"I will not ask you any questions," said the old knight; "no questions—none, Edmund—I can see from your face that you have not found her, or found her in such a manner that she is better lost!"

Tressilian was unable to reply and covered his face with his hands.

"It is enough—it is enough," said the old man. "You do not have to weep for her, Edmund. I have cause to weep, for she is my daughter."

By this time Sir Hugh was so exhausted that Tressilian and the clergyman persuaded him to lie down.

Tressilian and the clergyman then left the room and returned to the parlour. The clergyman was an old friend of the family, so Tressilian told him where and how he had found Amy.

They talked over what action they should take. Believing

with a heavy heart: sadly; Mistress: used before the 18th century for Miss or Mrs; faithful: worthy of trust; clergyman: priest; sunburnt: with skin darkened by the sun; exhausted: very tired

that Amy had run away with Varney, the clergyman suggested that they should appeal to the Earl of Leicester. Tressilian did not like that idea. He felt that they should go straight to the Queen and demand justice at her hands. After further discussion, they decided that the clergyman should speak to Sir Hugh.

They were just going in to see Sir Hugh when Will Badger, the old servant, entered the room. He told them that Sir Hugh was asleep and must not be disturbed. When he awakes he will be a new man," said Will happily.

"Why, Will? Do you have so much confidence in the doctor's medicine?" asked the clergyman.

"Not in the medicine of Sir Hugh's doctor! But, there's a gentleman who came attending on Master Tressilian. He has given Sir Hugh some medicine, which will do him more good than any of the doctor's medicine."

Tressilian was anxious and immediately called Wayland Smith to question him.

"Do not be alarmed," said Wayland Smith to both the gentlemen in the parlour. Then, turning to Tressilian he said, "Remember, I told you, that I learnt a good deal about herbs and plants and medicine when I worked with Doctor Doboobie."

"I hope you are being honest with me," said Tressilian.

"Do not be afraid," said Wayland. "Why should I want to harm the poor man whom you love? I am hoping to follow you and to serve you. Have faith in me and judge me only after the good knight wakes up."

Will Badger was right. When the old knight awoke, he was much better. Though still weak in body, he could think clearly and discussed his daughter's problems with his friends. He gave Tressilian the written authority to act on

confidence: faith; anxious: very worried; be alarmed: feel frightened or worried

his behalf. Tressilian was to go to court and appeal to the Queen for the recovery of Sir Hugh's daughter.

While Tressilian was preparing to leave, Wayland Smith came to see him. He asked if Tressilian was pleased with the effect his medicine had produced on Sir Hugh. He then begged Tressilian to take him to court with him.

As Tressilian hesitated, Wayland Smith said, "I know from Will Badger that you are going on a dangerous mission and I can serve your worship better than those sword-and-dagger men. My head will be worth a hundred of their hands!"

As he finished speaking, the tramping of a horse was heard in the courtyard and Will Badger entered Tressilian's room.

"Here is a messenger with a sealed letter for you, sir," he said.

Tressilian took the letter and read it. It was from Ratcliffe, the Earl of Sussex. The Earl was ill and wanted his friends around him. He asked Tressilian to come immediately to Say's Court, which was the Earl's residence.

"Send up the messenger at once, Will Badger," said Tressilian.

As the man entered the room he exclaimed, "Ah, Stevens, is it you? How does my good lord?"

"He is very ill, Master Tressilian, and therefore needs his friends around him."

"What is my lord's illness?" asked Wayland Smith, stepping forward.

"He is gradually losing his strength and perspires at night. He is also suffering from a loss of appetite and is feeling faint—"

authority: power given; hesitated: showed signs of being unwilling; dangerous mission: work in which there is some danger; sword-and-dagger men: soldiers; gradually: slowly; loss of appetite: not feeling hungry

"There is also pain in the stomach and a low fever. Isn't that so?" said Wayland Smith.

"Yes, you are right," said the messenger, looking surprised.

Turning to Tressilian, Wayland Smith said, "I know how this illness is caused and I know the cure too!"

"Are you quite sure?" asked Tressilian. "Remember, we are speaking here of one of the first nobles of England. This is not a subject that we can take lightly."

"God forbid," said Smith. "I am saying that I know his lordship's illness and can cure him. Remember what I did for Sir Hugh Robsart."

Tressilian thought for a few moments and then said, "We shall leave at once." He went to say good-bye to Sir Hugh and the others at Lidcote Hall. Then, taking Wayland Smith and the Earl of Sussex's servant, Stevens, with him, Tressilian travelled with the utmost speed towards London.

9 Tressilian at Say's Court

The three travellers were in such haste, that on the way they stopped only for food and drink and to give their horses some rest. Besides they were travelling through a part of the country which was under the influence of the Earl of Leicester. So, they journeyed under false names and wished to get out of the area as soon as possible.

At last they reached the outskirts of London. Before going further they decided to make a brief halt at an inn in the city. Wayland Smith wanted to go out to buy a few articles. Tressilian agreed to go with him. So, taking their swords both set out on foot.

They went into four or five chemists' shops. Tressilian noticed that in each shop Wayland asked for and purchased

utmost: greatest possible; outskirts: outer limits of a city or town; chemists' shops: shops where medicines are prepared and sold; purchased: bought

only one drug. He would examine the herb or gum offered to him very carefully. He rejected it, if he thought it was not the best. He then had the drug carefully weighed. In this way five or six different drugs were bought. There was one more drug he needed and for that they had to go from shop to shop. It seemed that none of the chemists had it. At last in Yoglan the Jew's shop, Wayland got what he wanted.

"I beg your pardon, sir, for having taken so much of your time," said Wayland. "But, no man can work without his tools."

Tressilian nodded, and asked, "Have you now got everything you wanted?"

"I have, sir," replied Wayland Smith.

"But why did you not make all your purchases from one shop? We have wasted nearly an hour," said Tressilian.

"No one shall learn my secret, sir!" was his quick reply. "If I bought all the drugs from one chemist and in their right quantities, then he would learn my secret."

They now returned to their inn. While Lord Sussex's servant went to prepare the horses, Wayland got a mortar from the cook and shut himself up in their room. The drugs which he had purchased were made into powder and mixed in their right quantities. Tressilian saw that the work was carried out with great skill. He was now sure that Wayland Smith knew how to handle drugs and must have had a great deal of practice in using them.

As soon as the horses were ready they left London and in an hour reached Say's Court, the ancient house of Ratcliffe, the Earl of Sussex.

As they approached the mansion, Tressilian and his companion were stopped several times by the guards and questioned. The sick Earl was very carefully guarded by his

tools: things a person needs for his special work; mortar: bowl of hard material in which substances are crushed with pestle: approached: came near

followers, because he held one of the highest ranks at court. The Earl of Leicester, who was also very powerful, was his rival and he was not to be trusted. Nobody at that time knew who would get the higher rank and greater favours from the Queen.

Queen Elizabeth liked to use both these powerful nobles in her service and in the service of the country. She showed favour to each of them in turn and thus managed to keep the supreme power in her own hands.

The present illness of the Earl of Sussex was looked upon by his followers as a great misfortune. They thought that the Earl's food had been poisoned by his enemies. His followers had therefore gathered round their sick lord to protect him, and Say's Court was full of armed men.

Tressilian was taken to the hall, while an attendant went to inform the Earl. The attendant returned in a very short time and informed Tressilian that the Earl wanted to see him.

The Earl was lying on his bed, but was glad to see Tressilian. They talked about the Earl's health; and Tressilian was surprised to find that the symptoms of the illness were exactly those described by Wayland Smith. The Earl also told Tressilian what the cook had said when he was questioned. A stranger, calling himself Demetrius, had made friends with the cook and lived with him for a few days. On the day when the Earl became ill, this fellow had advised the cook to use a herb in the food that he was preparing.

Demetrius had told the cook, "The food will be very tasty and his lordship will be very pleased with you."

When the Earl became ill, they looked everywhere for the stranger; but no one could find him. He had disappeared.

Tressilian told the Earl of Sussex all about Wayland

supreme: highest, greatest

Smith. The Earl listened carefully and then asked to see him.

After a short conversation with Wayland, the Earl agreed to try his medicine. He turned to Wayland and said, "Tell me how the medicine is to be taken. But remember if anything happens to me, you will be held responsible."

"I shall take all the risk of the treatment, my lord; but you must agree to a request I make," said Wayland. "While your lordship is under my treatment, you will not allow any other physician to interfere."

"That is quite fair," replied the Earl, "and now prepare the drug."

As soon as Wayland Smith was ready, he asked that all should leave the room except the Earl's two attendants. Tressilian wanted to stay as he was deeply interested; and Wayland allowed him to do so.

When his lordship had drunk the medicine, Wayland said, "I now request your lordship to lie down comfortably in bed." Turning to the others, he said, "I request you gentlemen to be very quiet, so that his lordship is not disturbed."

Under the effect of the drug, the Earl soon fell into a deep sleep. He slept all that day and through the night watched over by Wayland Smith, Tressilian and the two servants.

In the hall, all night, sat two of the Earl's followers keeping watch and guarding the bed chamber. One of these followers was a very young man, Walter Raleigh; the other was an older man called Blount.

Early in the morning, there was a knock at the gate and Raleigh was sent to see who it was. He returned after a few minutes.

With Blount there were now two other men. They too were followers of the Earl, Tracy and Markham by name.

Raleigh: (pronounced Rah'li)

As Walter Raleigh came in, they stopped talking and asked, "Who was at the gate just now?"

"Doctor Masters, physician to her Majesty, and sent by her special orders to inquire after the Earl's health," answered Walter.

"Ha! What!" exclaimed Tracy in surprise. "This is a great honour for our Earl; if he recovers from this illness, he will still be a match for Leicester! Is Masters with my lord just now?"

"Nay," replied Walter, "he is half way back to Greenwich by this time."

"You did not refuse him admission!" exclaimed Tracy.

"You were surely not so mad!" said Blount.

"Yes, I did refuse him admission," said Walter Raleigh.

"He has ruined us all!" cried out Tracy. My lord may live or die, he will never be in Her Majesty's favour again!"

"My good sirs," said Raleigh calmly, "just think what would have happened if I had allowed the learned doctor to see our lord. Doctor Masters and Wayland Smith would have had such a quarrel that it would have disturbed the Earl."

"And who is to take the blame for opposing the Queen's orders?" asked Tracy.

"I, who have done the wrong, will take the blame," said Walter.

Markham now spoke up, "In closing the door against Doctor Masters, Walter has done a daring and loving service to the Earl. Tressilian's man had said that the Earl was not to be disturbed when sleeping under the effects of his drugs."

Tressilian, looking very tired after a sleepless night, now

recovers: gets well; Greenwich: (pronounced gri-nij) a suburb of London on the river Thames, where in Elizabeth's time there was a royal palace; daring: bold

entered the hall. He told the men gathered there that the Earl had awakened and was feeling much better.

Later, the Earl was told of Doctor Masters's visit and how Raleigh had sent him away. After thinking over the matter, he ordered Blount, his Master of Horse, to take a boat and go down the river to the Palace of Greenwich. He was to take Walter Raleigh and Tracy with him. They were to carry the Earl's grateful thanks to the sovereign and to explain why Doctor Masters was not allowed to see the Earl.

10 Walter Raleigh Spreads His Cloak for the Queen

It was a beautiful day. The sun sparkled on the waters of the Thames, as the three companions set out for Greenwich Palace by boat.

Blount was worried because he did not like the mission on which the Earl of Sussex was sending him. As they were rowed down the river, he turned to Walter and said, "You are the cause of all this trouble and our present journey. Let me see if you can help out a plain fellow like me with your clever ways."

"Don't be afraid," said Raleigh, "I will help you."

They soon came to the landing-place below Greenwich Palace. But at the steps leading from the water's edge, they found the Queen's barge ready and waiting. Seeing this Blount wanted to return, but Walter Raleigh insisted on landing a little distance away and waiting for the Queen. They did this and stood near the gates behind the guards.

Soon the gates opened and the Royal procession came out. First came the guards. These were followed by the

Thames: (pronounced Temz) the river on which London stands—as the roads were bad, people used the waterway; mission: special work; barge: large flat-bottomed boat used on a river; insisted: asked forcefully

Without saying a word she nodded and passed on.

lords and ladies of the palace. Then came Queen Elizabeth leaning on the arm of Lord Hunsdon, her cousin.

Walter Raleigh and his two companions were standing close to the procession and in full view of the Queen. On the previous night, it had rained, and there was a muddy spot just where Walter Raleigh stood. When the Queen approached this spot she hesitated to walk over it. Quickly and without any loss of time, Raleigh took off his fine cloak and, spreading it over the muddy spot, bowed respectfully to the Queen. The Queen was surprised at the boldness shown by the young man. But, without saying a word she nodded, passed on and got into her barge.

The barge moved down the river leaving the three visitors behind.

"Come along," said Blount smiling, "your cloak will need a brushing today."

"This cloak," said Raleigh, "shall not be brushed while it is in my possession."

Their conversation was interrupted by one of the Queen's attendants. He came to them and said, "I was sent to a gentleman who has no cloak or a muddy one." Saying this, he looked at each of them carefully. Then turning to young Walter he said, "You, sir, I think, are the man. You will please follow me."

"He is in attendance on me," said Blount; "on me, the noble Earl of Sussex's Master of Horse."

"I have nothing to say to that," answered the messenger, "my orders are from Her Majesty, and concern this gentleman only." So saying he walked away, followed by Raleigh.

Tracy and Blount, who were left behind, were too surprised to say a word. At last, Blount, shaking his head, said, "Who would have thought this was going to happen!" Then slowly,

conversation: talk; messenger: one who brings a request or a

they walked back to their own boat and returned to Say's Court.

Walter Raleigh was taken down the steps to a small boat and rowed to the Queen's barge. When the boat reached the royal barge, young Walter was asked to come on to it. He was then taken to the Queen, where she was seated with her ladies-in-waiting. The muddy cloak was still hung over his arm.

Seeing the cloak, the Queen said, "You have today spoilt a very fine cloak, young man. We thank you for your thoughtful act and we assure that it shall not pass unrewarded. Go to our wardrobe keeper and he shall have orders to give you a new cloak."

"May it please your Majesty," said Walter after some hesitation, "it is not for a humble servant like me to ask, but if I may be allowed to choose...."

"You would prefer gold; is that so?" interrupted the Queen. "It shall be gold, if you desire it; but you will tell me how you are going to use it."

Walter waited patiently till the Queen had finished speaking and then said that he was not thinking of gold.

"How, boy!" said the Queen. "You want neither gold nor garment. Then, what is it that you desire?"

"Only permission, madam — if it is not asking too high an honour — permission, to wear the cloak which did you a small service."

"Permission to wear your own cloak, you silly boy!" said the Queen.

"It is no longer mine," said Walter; "when Your Majesty's foot touched it, it became a cloak fit for a prince!"

ladies-in-waiting: court ladies, who attend upon the Queen; we: the plural form used by a royal person sometimes instead of I; wardrobe keeper: the officer in charge of the clothes of the palace attendants; garment: dress

The Queen blushed, and laughing, said to those around her, "Did you ever hear anything like this, my lords and ladies?"

Then turning to Walter, she asked, "Who are you?"

"A gentleman of the household of the Earl of Sussex, so please Your Majesty. I was sent here by the Earl along with his Master of Horse with a message."

At once Queen Elizabeth became angry and said, "My Lord of Sussex has taught us how to regard his messages by the value he places upon ours! Coming to know of his lordship's illness, we sent our own doctor to him this morning. He was refused admission! I am certain he has now sent you with an apology; but we are in no mood to listen to it."

When the Queen had finished speaking, Raleigh quietly said, "Madam, I have been sent with no apology from the Earl of Sussex."

"Then why were you sent here, sir?" demanded the Queen.

"Madam, my lord of Sussex knows the offence could be considered treason. He has therefore sent the offender to you and placed him at your mercy," said Walter Raleigh. "The noble Earl was fast asleep when your messenger arrived. He came to know of what had happened only after he woke up this morning."

"And who then sent away Doctor Masters?" asked the Queen in surprise.

Bowing very low, Walter replied, "The offender, madam, is before you. I, and I alone, am fully to blame."

"What! Was it you? — and what made you refuse admission to Doctor Masters?"

"Madam," said the young man, "Lord Sussex's physician

blushed: became red in the face; apology: statement of regret for doing wrong or for hurting someone's feelings; treason: disloyalty, betraying the Queen

had given him some medicine and given us orders not to disturb him. I was obeying the physician's order. The Earl awoke this morning feeling much better."

"We are glad to hear that," said the Queen with satisfaction. Then turning to Walter she asked, "What is your name and family?"

"Raleigh is my name, most gracious Queen. I am the youngest son of a large but honourable family of Devonshire."

"Raleigh?" said Elizabeth, and then, after thinking for a while, "Have we not heard of your services in Ireland?"

"I have been fortunate, madam, to serve my sovereign and my country there," answered Raleigh.

"You are very young to have fought so well and to speak so well," said the Queen with a smile. "But you must be punished for turning back Masters!"

"To show penitence, Master Raleigh, I order you to wear your muddy cloak. What is more, you will continue to wear it till we ask you to stop. And here," she added, giving him a piece of gold in the shape of a chess-man, "I give you this to wear at the collar."

Raleigh knelt and as he took the gold figure from her hand, he kissed the fingers that gave it.

"My lords and ladies," the Queen now said, looking at those around her, "I have changed my plans. Instead of going to the city we shall pay a surprise visit to this poor Earl of Sussex. He is ill, and must be worried about what this silly boy did this morning."

The bargemen were ordered to stop at Deptford, so that the Queen could personally inquire about the health of the Earl. Raleigh wanted to go ahead and prepare those at Say's

penitence: sorrow and regret; chess-man: one of the sixteen pieces in the game of chess; bargemen: men in charge of the barge; Deptford: town near London

Court for the Queen's visit. But Elizabeth would not allow him to do so.

"Now the good Lord have pity on us!" thought Raleigh to himself. "This morning Fortune smiled on me. I ruined my cloak but I made a place for myself at court. May Fortune now smile on my gallant patron too!"

There was great confusion at Say's Court as news of the Queen's visit reached the followers of Sussex, through the people of Deptford.

The Earl, who was still very weak, threw a loose cloak round him and followed by Tressilian, hurried out of his bed chamber. But he did not get to the gates. The Queen had already entered the hall and on the way had seen the armed men. Her first words on seeing Sussex were, "Is this a royal garrison, my Lord of Sussex, that it holds so many armed men? Or, have we passed Say's Court and by mistake come to our Tower of London!"

Sussex tried to say something but was not allowed to speak by the Queen. "My lord," she continued, "we are going to inquire into this quarrel between you and the Earl of Leicester. Both of you have surrounded yourselves with armed men. And, you have dared to do so, close to our capital and our royal palace! Are you preparing for a war with each other?

"We are glad, my lord, that you have recovered from your illness without the help of the learned doctor we sent you. No! Don't say anything! We know what happened and have punished young Raleigh." Saying this she looked at Raleigh, and then spoke to Sussex again.

patron: a person who gives encouragement or financial support to another or to a cause; garrison: soldiers stationed in a town or fort; Tower of London: fortress on the banks of the river Thames —for centuries it was a royal residence, then a state prison, and now a part of it is a museum

"By the way, my lord," she continued, "you will not have this young man in your household for long. We shall take him into ours."

Sussex was too confused to say anything; and soon afterwards, the Queen took leave of Say's Court.

11 Preparations for the Court at Greenwich

By evening all London had heard of the Queen's visit to Say's Court.

"I am ordered to attend court tomorrow," said Leicester, speaking to Varney, "to meet, as people tell me, the Earl of Sussex. The Queen wishes to speak to both of us. This is the result of her visit to Say's Court."

"I ask you not to take the visit seriously," replied Varney. "I have my men there, who told me what had happened. When the Queen returned to her boat, after the visit, she said that Say's Court looked like a guard-house and smelt like a hospital."

"You may have got a lot of information, Varney; but you have omitted the most important piece of news. The Queen has added another young man to her court-followers," said Leicester.

"I am sure your worship means Raleigh, the Devonshire youth. At court, people call him, 'the Knight of the Cloak'."

"Well, well, well," said Leicester, shaking his head, "he may go far!" Then after a pause, he said, "Go and attend to your duties now. See, that all those coming with us to court are splendidly turned out. Our men must not only be more splendid than the men of Sussex, but they must be the finest at court.

"See that the men are well armed. But let the arms be carried as if they were a part of the uniform and not for

household: all persons, family and servants living in a house; omitted: left out; splendidly: very finely, in the best possible way; turned out: dressed

A Yeoman of the Guard.

use. And you, Varney, keep close to me. I may need you."

At Say's Court too, similar preparations were being made.

The Earl of Sussex told Tressilian that he had already sent his petition to the Queen. "I am sure you will succeed." Then calling to Blount, Ratcliffe asked, "Have you seen to the uniforms of our men? You must not worry about the cost."

"My good lord," said Blount, "Raleigh is here and has taken charge of all the preparations. Your followers will glitter like a morning in May! Your honourable lordship's kinsmen and followers are coming in large numbers to wait upon you. I am sure we will make a better show at court than Leicester."

"Give very strict instructions to all my men that they are not to quarrel with Leicester's men. There is to be no trouble at court. We shall leave at eleven in the morning as Her Majesty requires my presence exactly at noon."

While the two rival nobles were thus preparing for their visit, at Greenwich Palace, too, important arrangements were being made. Extra Yeomen of the Guard were brought by boat from London. A royal proclamation was issued saying that the nobles attending court the next day were not to bring armed followers. A company of the Queen's soldiers was ordered to camp outside the Palace grounds, ready for any trouble.

12 The Queen Holds Court

The eventful hour approached and the two Earls entered the Palace-yard with their friends and followers. Sussex

petition: a written request to right a wrong done, or to undertake some work; glitter: shine brightly; kinsmen: relatives; noon: mid-day; Yeomen of the Guard: the guards at the Tower of London, who wear a special uniform; proclamation: that which is made known to the public by the head of a country; eventful: full of important happenings

and his followers had come by boat from Deptford; while Leicester had come by road.

Exactly at noon, the bell tolled the hour, and the Palace gates were opened. The followers of both the Earls remained in the courtyard eyeing each other, while the Earls moved slowly towards the entrance. Sussex was accompanied by Tressilian, Blount and Raleigh; while Leicester had Varney with him. At the door leading to the presence-room, Sussex and Leicester greeted each other very coldly. Then Sussex, being the older peer, entered first, followed by Leicester. Tressilian, Blount and Varney were stopped at the door by the guards and had to wait in the hall. Raleigh, of course, was allowed to enter the presence-room.

The Queen was already seated, surrounded by many lords and ladies. Both the Earls moved up to the throne, bowed and stood aside. Elizabeth looked at them and then spoke to those gathered in the room.

"My lords, both my grandfather and father passed laws that the nobles of this civilized land should not travel in the country with armed men. How is it that these laws are not obeyed? I will not have my people oppressed and the peace of my kingdom disturbed by powerful nobles who keep private armies.

"My lord of Leicester and you, my Lord of Sussex, I command you both to be friends with each other; or by the crown I wear, you shall find an enemy who will be too strong for both of you!"

"Madam," said the Earl of Leicester, "the Earl of Sussex has done me great wrong and that is why I have quarrelled with him."

tolled the hour: rang out the exact number of times to tell the hour; eyeing: watching; presence-room: the room in which the Queen saw her subjects; peer: person belonging to the British nobility — Duke, Marquis, Earl, etc.; civilized; educated and advanced; oppressed: kept down by force

"Madam," said Sussex in his turn, "all I ask is, that my Lord of Leicester should say how I have wronged him. I have spoken only the truth!"

"My lords," interrupted the Queen, "I will not allow both of you to lose your tempers. Let me see you both shake hands and forget this petty quarrel."

The two Earls looked at each other, unwilling to make the first move.

"Sussex, Leicester," said Elizabeth looking at both, "I command you both."

But again both Earls remained stubborn.

Elizabeth, now very angry, turned to an officer and asked for the guards to be kept ready. Then, to the two Earls she said, "My lords, I bid you once more to shake hands. He that refuses I shall order to be locked up in the Tower."

Leicester was the first to speak, "The prison, I can bear: but to be away from you, and not to see you, madam, I could not bear! — Here, Sussex, is my hand."

"And here," said Sussex, "is mine."

"Good," said the Queen, "I am pleased. She then looked at Leicester and spoke. "My lord, you have a gentleman in your household called Varney."

"Yes, gracious madam," replied Dudley.

"This fellow of yours," the Queen continued, "has persuaded the daughter of Sir Hugh Robsart, a good Devonshire knight, to run away with him."

Hearing this Leicester turned pale and looked so ill that the Queen, in alarm, cried out, "My lord are you ill? Call Masters — call the doctor, where is he?"

Leicester, exercising great self control, said that he was not ill.

interrupted: broke in upon a person speaking; petty: small, unimportant; stubborn: obstinate, refusing to obey; knight: a person to whom a title or honour is given

Leicester's confusion was noticed by all who stood around the Queen. They started talking to each other in whispers. The Queen, her own suspicions now aroused, looked closely at Leicester and asked, "Is there more in this story than we see? Or, is there something you do not want us to know "

As she did not receive an immediate answer, she said, "Where is Varney? Call this Varney here at once. There is one Tressilian also mentioned in the petition — Let them both be brought before us."

The guards obeyed the royal command and Tressilian and Varney were brought before their sovereign. Observing the look on his master's face and seeing Tressilian, Varney immediately guessed the cause of the trouble.

"Is this true?" demanded the Queen, giving him a look which had made many men tremble. "Have you persuaded a young lady of birth, the daughter of Sir Hugh Robsart of Lidcote Hall, to run away with you?"

Varney knelt down and said. "We have exchanged messages of love between us."

"Messages of love!" said the Queen repeating his last words. "If you were honest in your love, why did you not ask the lady's father for her hand in marriage?"

"Your Grace," said Varney, still on his knees, "I dared not. She was promised in marriage to another, one Master Edmund Tressilian whom I now see standing here "

"You had no right to break the father's contract," said the Queen, slowly shaking her head. Then she asked, "Are you married to the girl?"

Varney, after a moment's hesitation, answered, "Yes."

Leicester, who had been shaking with anger, could not help crying out, "You false villain!" Saying this he was about to step forward ready to confess his secret marriage to Amy and retire from the court. However, one look at

suspicions: feeling that something is wrong

Sussex and the thought of his rival's triumph, made him change his mind.

Not knowing the cause of Leicester's anger, the Queen said, "Nay, my lord, we shall deal with this matter." Turning to Varney she said, "I command you to speak the truth!"

"Gracious madam, I have spoken the truth," said Varney humbly.

The Queen now looked at Tressilian and said, "You have heard what Master Varney has said. Forget the lady, good sir. That is all you can do! We shall make the father's grief less by giving a good position at court to Master Varney. He will then be able to keep his wife in comfort."

Tressilian bowed to the Queen and said, "Most gracious Sovereign, I do not believe that Varney is speaking the truth."

Hearing these words, Varney stood up ready to draw his sword. Tressilian too placed his hand on his sword.

The Queen stopped them both. Her commanding voice cried out, "Peace, both of you! Do you know where you are?" Then turning to Sussex and Leicester she added, "Your followers are guided by their masters' example. They quarrel and fight in my court and even in my presence! Look you, sirs," she continued turning to Varney and Tressilian, "there is to be no talk of drawing swords. You may draw swords when I ask you to do so and when your country needs you!"

The Queen stopped speaking and then continued in a milder tone.

"I must however do justice between these two men — My Lord of Leicester, on your honour, are you prepared to say that your servant speaks the truth. Do you know that he is married to Amy Robsart?"

Leicester had allowed matters to go too far and could only say, "To the best of my belief — indeed on certain

triumph: joy at one's success or victory

knowledge — I know that Amy Robsart is married."

Tressilian was not satisfied and wanted some proof of the marriage; but the Queen refused to listen to him.

She now spoke to Leicester, "My lord of Leicester, I hope you remember we are going to visit your Castle of Kenilworth next week. We request you to invite the good Earl of Sussex too."

Hearing this Leicester had no choice. He had to invite Sussex, and Sussex had to accept the invitation. Before dismissing court, the Queen made one more request.

"We have one more word to say to you, my lords. My Lord of Sussex, Tressilian is your close friend and follower and my Lord of Leicester, Varney is yours. You will both, therefore, see that they attend you at Kenilworth next week. Varney must bring his wife to Kenilworth. This is my command, and we expect to see that it is obeyed!"

13 Varney Makes Plans

When Leicester returned from court to his rooms, he was very tired and sad. He knew that he could not now speak the truth. He would lose for ever, his good name and the respect of others at court and among his peers. Poor Amy; his marriage must remain a secret for a very, very long time! His own safety, besides his good name, depended on it. These sad thoughts were disturbed by Varney's entry into the room.

"You have forced me into making a false statement, Varney," he said.

"Do you blame me for what happened, my lord? Your worship was present and could have spoken the truth and ruined yourself. It was not for me, your faithful servant, to speak out the truth without your orders," was Varney's quick reply.

respect: good opinion or regard

"You are right, Varney," said the Earl. "My own ambition has been a traitor to my love. Poor Amy; she wishes to take her rightful place as my wife. Now her presence at Kenilworth will be fatal. Yet, the Queen must be obeyed; and Amy must be at Kenilworth when the Queen comes on her visit. What shall we do?"

"Let me think over this problem, my lord, and I am sure I shall be able to suggest a plan."

With these words, Varney left his master. He went to see an old white-haired man, whom he had kept locked up in a small apartment next to his own rooms. This old man was no other than Wayland Smith's master, Doctor Doboobie. He had now taken the name Alasco; and when he visited Say's Court, he called himself Demetrius.

Varney asked the old man, "Tell me, why did your drug fail at Say's Court?"

"I don't know," said the old man. "There is only one medicine that could have saved the Earl's life. No man in England knows about this medicine, besides myself. One of the drugs for preparing this medicine is also very difficult to get. So, I just don't know what saved the Earl of Sussex's life."

"There is some talk of a quack, who looked after him," said Varney. "Are you sure there is no one in England who knows this secret medicine?"

"There was one man," said the Doctor. "He was my servant, who may have stolen the secret; but I am sure he is dead."

"You must leave this place immediately. Sussex's men are looking for Demetrius," said Varney. "I am going to send you to an old house which I have in the country. You can stay there for some time."

traitor: disloyal person, one who betrays another; fatal: causing or ending in death or disaster

"In this house shall I have a laboratory?" asked the Doctor.

"A whole workshop, man; and you may spend as many hours as you like there. First, however, you will prepare that same drug for me."

"I shall make no more of that drug," the old man answered firmly. "I am no mere dealer in poison. I am a student of alchemy, that great science, which will change all base metals to gold."

"If you will not make that drug for me, then I will see that you are handed over to the Earl of Sussex's men!

"But, cheer up, old man. You can satisfy me and also make as much gold as you like. I want only the mild form of the drug. You have told me that it causes vomiting, headache, and the person loses all energy and does not want to move out."

"Yes, the mild form of the drug will do what you say."

"Are you quite sure that the person's life will not be in danger?" asked Varney anxiously.

"Yes, there will be no danger to life if the dose is not increased," the Doctor assured him.

"You will be in charge; and if you do exactly what I tell you, then you will get a good reward," said Varney. He told the old man Amy's story; and why it was important that she should not come to Kenilworth.

Varney asked the old man to be ready to leave with Lambourne early next morning. The old man went into his room and Varney locked the door from the outside. Varney next called Lambourne and gave him full instructions. He gave the key of the Doctor's room to Lambourne and parted with the words: "Be ready to leave very early. I will give you a letter to Foster. The Doctor is to have the old laboratory

alchemy: chemistry in the Middle Ages; assured: to be sure of what one says; instructions: orders about what to do

in Cumnor Place, to work there as he pleases. Be kind to him on the journey; but, do not let him escape. If he tries, shoot him! These are my orders."

* * * * *

As the date of the Queen's visit came nearer, great preparations were made at Kenilworth Castle. Leicester himself returned to Kenilworth to supervise personally. Neither money nor trouble was spared. Soon all England was talking about the Queen's visit. Leicester was now a great favourite at court, and the people believed that the Queen would soon marry the Earl.

But at this time, Leicester himself was the most unhappy man in the country. Elizabeth had not forgotten Amy or her own command that she must be present at Kenilworth.

One day, Leicester called Varney and asked him what they should do.

"Will you not persuade my lady to take my humble name for a short time?" asked Varney after some hesitation.

"How sir!" said Dudley angrily. "My Countess call herself your wife! Never!"

"Alas, my lord," answered Varney, "that is how Elizabeth knows her. How will you contradict that without letting everybody know the truth?"

"Think of something else, Varney," said the Earl, looking very worried. "What you suggest is impossible. I know that I cannot persuade her or order her to take your name, even for an hour!"

"Suppose we find someone then, to take her place?" said Varney.

"Utter madness, Varney," said Leicester. "Tressilian will be present, and there are sure to be others at court, who know Amy."

supervise: watch and direct; contradict: deny; utter: complete

"Then, my lord, I beg you to go to Cumnor Place yourself and try to persuade my lady."

"Nay, Varney," said Leicester shaking his head, "I cannot force her to do something so dishonourable. It would be a base return for the love she has for me. *You* go, Varney, and see if you can persuade her."

"I will go, my lord; but you must first give me a letter to my lady," said the clever Varney.

Leicester wrote a few lines to Amy. He asked her to agree to pass off as Varney's wife for a few days at Kenilworth, when the Queen would be there. He said that his life and honour depended on her agreeing to do so.

Varney left immediately. As he rode in great haste to Cumnor, he made plans. If Amy did not agree to come as his wife, then she must become too ill to go to Kenilworth. He would ask Alasco to use his medicine. Amy would not be allowed to interfere with his, or his lord's ambition.

14 The Pedlar at Cumnor

Our story now returns to the Black Bear Inn at Cumnor. There had been a fair in the neighbourhood and the inn was crowded with people. Among the visitors was a pedlar. He joined the merry crowd of people who were laughing and talking in the public room.

Presently, this merry crowd was joined by Michael Lambourne and Alasco. Alasco did not want to be seen at the village inn, and wanted to go straight to Cumnor Place. But Lambourne would not listen to him.

"I will stay and meet my uncle here," he said, taking no notice of Alasco. The old man chose a quiet, dark corner

base: shameful; fair: market held on special days, often with entertainment; pedlar: a person who goes from house to house selling small articles; public room: room in an inn where people gathered

of the room and sat down.

Lambourne spent a long time talking to his friends. He asked about Tony Foster. His friends told him that he never cared to see them, or to visit the inn.

"I will make Tony Foster come down to the inn," said Lambourne. He called one of the boys, who worked in the inn, and told him, "Go to Cumnor Place and give this letter to Master Foster. Tell him, that his friend Michael Lambourne has come to his uncle's inn, and wants to speak to to him on business of great importance."

The messenger returned to say that Foster would come to the inn in a short time.

While the merry-making, eating and drinking was going on, the pedlar had quietly gone up to his own room. Here, Giles Gosling found him.

"You came away suddenly," said the landlord.

"Yes, there is the devil among them now," remarked the pedlar.

"Do you mean my nephew?" asked Giles Gosling.

"Yes, there is the devil among them now." remarked the Why are they here? Where are they going?"

"These are questions, friend, that I cannot answer," said Giles Gosling. He then took out a ring and began looking at it. "You have brought me a very fine ring from Master Tressilian," he said; "and I want to help you."

The pedlar was none other than Wayland Smith. Tressilian had sent him to Cumnor with the ring, to find out all he could about Amy. Wayland had recognized his old master, Doctor Doboobic, and did not want to be seen by him.

Giles had already told him that he had no important news to give him. The lady was living at Cumnor Place, still closely confined.

Then, after a little thought Giles said, "you have a very good opportunity of visiting her just now. Tony Foster is coming here and my nephew and he will not leave this place

for about an hour. Take your merchandise and the old servant may let you in."

Wayland liked the suggestion. "Tell me one thing," he said, "Is the old man going to Cumnor Place?"

"Yes, I think so," said Giles.

"That is all I want to know," Wayland replied firmly. "Help me with my pack, my good host, and I go immediately."

With these words, he lifted the pack on to his back; and guided by Giles Gosling left by the side-gate of the inn.

He took the quiet by-lanes leading to Cumnor Place. An old woman opened the door, when he knocked. He told her that he would like to show his goods to the ladies of the family. She took the pedlar to an old ruined garden-house and left, pointing inside.

Seeing the pedlar, Amy said, "Who has come here, Janet?"

"He is a pedlar, madam," said Janet. "I am surprised the old woman let him in."

"It is very fortunate, girl! We lead such a dull life here. Just think, for six long months I have not bought one yard of cloth or one small trinket for my use and of my own choice."

"Ay, my gracious lady," said Janet. "But, pray, allow me to send the man away. What will my father say?"

"He is not my father, Janet, nor I hope my master!" answered the lady. "Now call the man here—Wait, I shall call him myself, if you are so frightened of your father's scolding."

After the pedlar had spread out his goods, Amy bought a few things for herself. She also bought something for Janet, as well as some woollen material for the two old women who cleaned the rooms. She then saw a silver box

pack: a bundle of things tied together for carrying; garden-house a room with wide windows in a garden; yard: unit of length 0.919 metres; trinket: ornament of small value

and asked, "What is this paste, so carefully put in this silver box?"

"It is some special medicine, madam," said the pedlar. "If a person feels lonely, disappointed or sad, a very small quantity of this medicine will help. Taken once a day for a week, it will protect the heart against these feelings." After some further discussion about the merits of the medicine, Amy decided to buy it. She agreed to take a small quantity of it daily.

Countess Amy then piled up her purchases, gave her purse to Janet and asked her to pay the pedlar. Wishing the pedlar good evening she walked into the house.

Wayland saw that he would not now get a chance to speak to Amy. So, he decided to approach Janet.

"Maiden," he said, "I can see from your face that you love your mistress. She has great need of faithful service."

"And she is a person well deserving of my faithful service," said Janet. "But why do you mention this?"

"Maiden, I want to speak to you frankly. I am not altogether what I seem," said Wayland, lowering his voice. "I am a friend of your mistress. I have come to warn you. This evening or tomorrow, an old man will come here with your father. I am asking you to beware of him; for your own sake and that of your mistress. I do not know why he is coming here. But, wherever he goes, death and disease go with him!

"Do not alarm your mistress. But see that she takes the medicine I have sold her. It is an antidote against poison."

Just then loud talking was heard near the garden door. Foster, with Lambourne and Alasco, was returning to Cumnor Place. Wayland seized his pack and jumped into some

paste: powder mixed with a little water; discussion: talk; purchases: articles bought; approach: to speak to; seem: appear; beware: be very careful, be warned against; antidote: medicine used against a poison

thick bushes to hide. Janet ran into the garden-house. She took all the purchases Amy had made, and quickly went into the Countess's rooms.

Wayland, hidden behind the bushes, could hear some of the conversation. All this time he had believed that Varney alone was responsible for the plot to poison the Earl of Sussex. But from their talk he learnt that Leicester too knew something about it! He had no doubts now that Doctor Doboobie's presence at Cumnor Place meant great danger to Amy.

He decided to leave the Black Bear Inn immediately. He would live in the neighbourhood and keep changing his place of residence often. Janet had made a good impression on him. He wanted to see her again, and with Janet's help, he would try to save Amy.

15 Amy Escapes

A few days after the pedlar's visit, Varney arrived at Cumnor Place.

Foster came to Amy and said, "Master Richard Varney has arrived. He has come with a message from my lord. He has ridden all night and begs to speak to your ladyship."

"Is it Varney?" asked the Countess, openly showing her dislike for him. "He comes with news from the Earl of Leicester, you say; well, admit him."

"Do you bring news from my lord, Master Varney?" Countess Amy asked, as soon as he entered. Then seeing his worried face, she became alarmed and said, "Is he ill?"

"No, madam, thank Heaven!"

"Then tell me immediately and briefly, what is my lord's message," commanded Amy.

"Madam," answered Varney, "we are not alone; and my lord's message is for your ears only."

escapes: gets away, gets free

"Leave us, Janet and Master Foster," said the lady, "but remain in the next apartment so that I may call you if necessary."

Both Janet and her father, as they waited behind the locked door, were greatly troubled Foster looked at his daughter and said, "Pray, Janet, pray. We have all need of prayer— Evil has been gathering around us, my love. Varney's sudden and strange arrival is not for any good."

After some time, the Countess's agitated voice was heard calling out to them and asking Varney to unlock the door. This was done; and Foster and Janet entered the apartment. The Countess stood in the middle of the room, looking very angry.

Janet ran to her mistress and anxiously asked, "Madam, what is the matter? What has happened?"

"What in the name of Satan have you done to her?" Foster asked Varney.

"Who, I?—nothing," said Varney, but he did not look at them. "Nothing, except giving her her lord's command, which she does not want to obey."

"Now, by Heaven, Janet," said her mistress, "the false traitor lies!—Look at him, Janet! He has the outside of a gentleman; and comes here and tells me that my lord commands me to go with him to Kenilworth. There, in the presence of the Queen, the nobles and before my own husband, acknowledge him—*him* there—that cloak-brushing, shoe-cleaning fellow—*my* husband!

"I will never believe that the noble Dudley agreed to this dishonourable, shameful plan. And if he did, this is how I destroy its memory for ever!"

So saying, she tore into pieces Leicester's letter and stamped on it.

agitated: greatly disturbed, troubled; acknowledge: agree that he is

When Janet tried to calm her mistress, she angrily said, "Let me go, Janet. Even if these words are my last words, I say, he lies. He has his own wicked plans to carry out."

Varney was so surprised and frightened by Amy's angry words, that he was only able to say, "Madam, you are mistaken."

"Go, begone, Sir," said Amy. "I scorn you so much, that I am ashamed to have been angry with you."

Varney followed by Foster, left the room. Once out of the room, he went to see Alasco.

Amy, left alone in her room, slowly calmed down. She began to think. She told Janet, "I will not stay here any longer. I fear him, and Janet, I fear your father too! I will escape from Cumnor."

"Alas, Madam," said Janet sadly, "where will you fly and how will you escape from these walls?"

"I do not know, Janet," said the unfortunate young lady, "I am in the hands of wicked men."

At that moment Foster entered the room. He had in his hands a cup and a small flask. He looked frightened and his hands shook. His daughter looked at him. Then walking up to him said, "Father, I will take these. I will give my mistress a drink when she wants one."

"No, my child," Foster replied firmly. "You will not render this service to the lady!"

"But, why not, father?" asked Janet.

"Why not?" said Foster, now getting angry, "because I say so! Go! Leave for the evening prayers."

"I will not go this evening," said Janet, who was now sure that the flask contained some poison.

Foster left the room, taking the flask with him. He went

scorn: feel contempt and no respect for; flask: a narrow-necked bottle; render: do or give

back to Varney.

When alone, Janet looked at her mistress. She was so full of sorrow and shame that she began to weep.

"Do not weep for me, Janet," said the Countess kindly.

"No, madam, it is not for *you* that I weep. It is for those who are dishonourable." She then took up her cloak and said, "Farewell, madam!"

"You are leaving me, Janet?"

"No, madam," was Janet's firm reply. "God willing, there is a way of escape. I have prayed day and night for guidance, to find out where my duty lay. Did my duty lie to that unhappy man, my father, or to you? I now know what to do. Please, do not ask me any more. I will return in a little while."

After Janet had gone, Varney came to Amy's room, with the cup and flask, to complete the work Foster had left unfinished. At the same time Alasco sat with Foster assuring him that the drug was harmless and safe. "The lady will feel very sleepy and tired. She will not want to move out of her room; but it will do her no other harm."

When Janet returned she hurried to her mistress's apartments. She found her seated with her arms crossed over a table and her head resting on it. After a lot of shaking and persuasion, Amy raised her head. Her face was very pale "Janet, I drank it. I am poisoned," was what she said.

"You are not, my dearest lady," answered Janet. "What you have swallowed cannot harm you, because you have been taking the antidote. Shake off this feeling of tiredness and sleep. A way of escape is open to you."

"Escape!" exclaimed the lady, and got out of the chair. Helped by Janet, she walked up and down the room till she felt stronger.

persuasion: by talking, to get a person to do something

They crossed the dark, silent garden and reached the gate.

"You spoke of escape, Janet. Is it really possible? Am I so lucky?"

"Hear me then," said Janet. "I went out to see the pedlar, who is really a friend. He was sent here by Master Tressilian, and is now waiting at the side gate to take you away."

"If the pedlar is a friend of Tressilian, I can certainly trust him," said Amy.

A few things were quickly collected and tied into a small bundle. They also packed a few valuable ornaments and a casket of jewels. Janet told her mistress that they would be useful in an emergency.

When everything was ready and Amy had changed into one of Janet's dresses, she said, "Will you not come away with me, Janet?"

"Lady, I would very willingly go with you; but if I leave this place, they will at once know of your flight. I must stay here. I will tell them that you are ill and do not want to be disturbed or to see anyone. They will believe this; and think it is the drug doing its work."

Janet had her own keys and now, using these, they slipped, very silently, out of the house. They crossed the dark, silent garden and reached the gate.

"I suppose you will be going to your father's house," said Janet.

"No, Janet," replied Amy sadly.

"Then, where will you go, madam?"

"To Kenilworth, girl," said the Countess, boldly. "I will see these revels — these princely revels — about which the whole country is talking. Surely I can be a guest in my husband's halls when the Queen feasts there!"

"I pray God you may be a welcome one!" said Janet.

ornament: an article that gives beauty; casket: a small box for jewels; emergency: serious happening; revels: joyous festivals with merry-making

She now opened the gate.

Wayland was waiting outside with a horse. "All is safe," said Wayland. "I have, however, managed to get only one horse. The lady will ride and I shall walk. Tomorrow I shall try and get another horse."

* * * * * *

After a weary journey, they reached Warwick. They were now only a few miles from Kenilworth Castle. The Queen herself was at Warwick Castle and would go to Kenilworth on the next day.

Crowds were making their way towards Kenilworth. Bands of players, jugglers and musicians were all going to Kenilworth. They hoped that they would be asked to perform before the Queen.

Wayland and Amy took many by-roads to avoid the crowds and at last reached the gates of Kenilworth.

Here, Wayland was mistaken for one of the magicians called to perform before the Queen. He and his companion were, therefore, allowed to enter without much difficulty.

16 Amy at Kenilworth

Amy had arrived at Kenilworth; but her troubles were not over. She thought about her position and became very nervous. Everybody was so busy rushing here and there, that no one took any notice of her or Wayland.

Wayland had brought Amy safely to Kenilworth.

Now, he turned to her and asked what her commands were.

"Commands?" she said in a low voice, as if talking to herself. "Indeed, I have the right to command, but who is there to obey me?"

players: actors

She spoke to a servant who was passing. "Stop sir, I wish to speak to the Earl of Leicester."

"With whom do you wish to speak?" asked the man astonished. Then he looked at Amy and seeing her simple clothes, just shook his head in answer.

"My business with the Earl is most urgent," repeated the Countess.

"You must find someone else to carry your message," said the man. "I should call my lord from the Queen's royal presence to do your business, should I? All the thanks I will get, will be a good whipping!" The fellow was talking loudly and rudely and a few people had stopped to listen.

Wayland was now alarmed both for himself and for the lady. He looked around and spoke in a low voice to a man who appeared to have some authority over the others.

This man ordered one of the men standing around to take charge of the visitors' horses, and himself acted as their guide. Amy and Wayland Smith were taken through the great gateway into the inner courtyard. They crossed the courtyard and the guide led them to a tower, close to the great hall. They climbed up to a small room which, for the occasion of the Queen's visit, had been turned into a guest room. It had a bed and a table in it. Amy saw some writing material on the table. This gave her an idea of sending a letter to Dudley. Till she received his answer, she decided to remain quietly in this room.

The guide, who was paid generously by Wayland for bringing them to the room, was now requested to bring something for them to eat.

Before the guide returned with food, Amy had finished her letter. She gave it to Wayland and said, "Good friend. I request you to take this letter to the noble Earl of Leices-

astonished: greatly surprised; authority: power or the right to give orders

ter. This is my last request. I shall not trouble you any more. If I should see happy days again, I shall not forget your services to me. I hope for the best. Give the letter into Lord Leicester's own hands."

Wayland now persuaded the lady to take some refreshments. Then he left, after advising her not to go out and to lock the door from the inside.

As he came away from Amy's room, Wayland was both puzzled and anxious. He knew that Tressilian was at Kenilworth, in attendance on the Earl of Sussex. When Amy wanted to come to Kenilworth, he believed that she wanted to place herself under Tressilian's protection. Now the lady had given him a letter to be delivered to Leicester, who was Varney's patron. Varney was the man who had already tried to harm her!

Wayland was also very anxious about his own safety. After what he had done to help Amy, his own life was in danger. So, he decided to find Tressilian and tell him of the lady's arrival.

"He will be a better judge than I about the letter too," thought Wayland. "I will give the letter to him, and he can do what he pleases with it."

He felt that his responsibility would then be over. He wanted to get out of Kenilworth as soon as possible. With this thought uppermost in his mind, he went to look for Tressilian.

While he was walking and looking around in the courtyard, someone pulled his sleeve. He turned to see his old friend of the village, Dickie Sludge. Dickie was in Kenilworth Castle with a company of players. He too had left the village soon after Wayland went away. Dickie told him his own story, and wanted to know why Wayland Smith was

refreshments: food and drink; responsibility: duty to care for and protect

in Kenilworth. Dickie was at the gate and had seen his old friend enter with his lady companion. He was eager to know who she was.

When Wayland told him that she was his sister, Dickie said, "I know that is not true! You do not want to tell me who she is; but I shall find out." With these words he ran away.

After Dickie left him, Wayland continued his search for Tressilian. He did not want to attract attention to himself and therefore did not try to ask the servants.

He said to himself again and again, "Oh, I wish Master Tressilian would appear and I can then get away."

After some time, Wayland heard the servants saying that the Queen's arrival was delayed and the two Earls with some of their followers were returning to Kenilworth. Wayland was now certain that Tressilian was with the Earl of Sussex. Hoping to find him as soon as he entered Kenilworth, he went and stood at the main gate.

Unfortunately, Tressilian came alone and entered through a side gate. He decided to go to his room. He had been given the master-key. He would come down to receive the Queen, when the castle bells announced her arrival. He made his way to the tower near the great hall and climbed up to his room. He opened the door, and saw Amy Robsart sitting in the room. Both were greatly surprised to see each other.

"Tressilian," said Amy, "why have you come here?"

"Nay, why are *you* here, Amy? Have you, at last, come to ask for my help?" he said in his turn.

Amy answered sorrowfully, "I need no help, Tressilian. Believe me, I am near someone whom law and love should oblige to protect me."

"I see before me the wife of Varney and the villain has done some injustice to you."

oblige: require, compel

"The wife of Varney!" said Amy with anger and scorn. "May I ask you, sir, why you choose such a base name to call the—the—"

At this point the Countess of Leicester almost told Tressilian who she really was. But, thinking of her promise to Dudley, she remained silent. "Never," she thought, "will I break my promise." But, her eyes filled with tears.

"Alas, Amy! Your eyes contradict your tongue! You speak of a protector willing and able to watch over you; but your eyes tell me you are ruined and forsaken by the wretch."

"Do not call him a wretch!" cried Amy.

"Yes, a wretch, I say. If he were any better, you would not be here alone in my apartment."

"In your apartment?" repeated Amy. "In your apartment? I shall leave at once." With these words, she moved towards the door; and then, she stopped. Turning to Tressilian she spoke in a very sad voice, "Alas! I had forgotten. I do not know where to go—"

"I see it all," said Tressilian, going to her, and gently leading her back into the room. "You do need my help and protection. As soon as the Queen arrives, you shall meet her at the Castle gate and receive justice at her hands. I shall go and immediately find Sussex."

Now thoroughly alarmed, Amy said, "Tressilian, you have always been very generous. Grant me one request," she begged. "Wait just for twenty-four hours before you do anything."

After some more persuasion, Tressilian gave in to her wish. He said, "Since you desire it so much, Amy, I agree not to interfere by word or action for twenty-four hours, and shall leave your fate in your own hands, during that

forsaken: left without support or help; wretch: mean person, villain

period. I promise you this; but when that time is over . . ."

"You are free to act as you think best," said Amy.

Tressilian then told Amy to continue to use the room, and left. He went out into the courtyard and walked there, thinking of Amy and her problems. Here, Wayland Smith found him.

"Thank God, I have found your worship at last!" he said "The lady has escaped from Cumnor Place—"

"And is at present in the Castle," said Tressilian. Wayland looked very surprised. So, Tressilian continued, "I know it. I have seen her. Tell me, did you arrange that she should be in my room?"

"I could think of no safe place for the lady and was happy to find an usher who knew where your room was," said Wayland. He then told Tressilian about the letter which the lady wanted given to Leicester.

"I am waiting only for your instructions regarding that letter, and then I am leaving this place." With these words, Wayland looked in his pockets for the letter; but could not find it. "I must have left it with my clothes," he said.

Tressilian was very angry with him for being so careless and ordered him to find it immediately.

Wayland was deeply hurt by Tressilian's anger. He had risked his own life for the lady and this was his reward! However, he looked everywhere for the letter; but could not find it. He then realized that Dickie Sludge had taken it away, out of mischief. He did not want to go back to Tressilian, but tried to see Amy. However; the guards in the room below frightened him and he went away.

Poor Amy waited in her room, hour after hour, for some message from Dudley. She knew that in the important business of the day there was bound to be some delay. The letter

problems: difficulties to be solved; usher: a person who shows people where to go

might not reach him soon; and even after he got it, he might not be able to come or send a message.

Sitting in her little room, all alone, she said to herself again and again, "I will not expect him till late at night. He cannot be absent from his royal guest even to see me! I know that he will come earlier, if that is possible. But I will not expect him."

Yet, she did expect him. If there was the slightest noise outside her door, she thought it was Dudley.

17 The Queen Arrives

It was the evening of the 9th July 1575. The sun had set and it was getting dark. The Queen was about to enter the outer gates of Kenilworth Castle. There was loud cheering from the crowds outside the gates. The people had waited for hours and hours to see their Queen pass.

As the Queen passed through the outer gates, a rocket was fired. The great bell of the Castle began to ring. It could be heard loud and clear, even above the cheering voices.

The royal procession was lit by two hundred torches, which were carried by men on horseback. It moved slowly towards the Castle. The Queen, splendidly dressed and sparkling with jewels, rode a milk-white horse. She was the central figure, towards whom all eyes turned. The ladies of the court rode on both sides of Her Majesty. Behind them rode the courtiers. All were in their most splendid clothes.

Leicester, who was Her Majesty's Master of Horse, and was today her host, rode on the Queen's right hand. He was dressed in cloth of gold and sparkled with jewels. He rode a black horse. He had bought it in Europe at a very high price for this occasion. It was all black with not a

rocket: a tube-shaped case with fast-burning material fired into the air as a signal

single white hair! Varney rode close behind his master.

On his return from Cumnor Place, Varney had informed Leicester that the Countess was ill. This illness, according to Varney, was fortunate. It was a good excuse for his wife not being present at Kenilworth, as ordered by the Queen.

Leicester accépted what Varney told him; but he was feeling guilty and remorseful about the way he had treated Amy. This was causing Varney some anxiety. A wicked and ambitious man himself, he did not want Leicester to ruin both of them by publicly declaring his marriage to Amy.

The royal procession had now reached the Castle walls. To welcome the Queen, warlike music was played by musicians from the different towers. As the Queen entered the Castle, colourful fireworks were let off.

The great hall, which the Queen now entered, was lit by twenty-four wax torches. At the other end of the hall, under a canopy, was the royal throne. Leicester led the Queen to this throne. After she was seated, he knelt before her. He thanked her for the very great honour the Queen had shown him by this visit. Then standing up, he told her about the various preparations that had been made for her visit and amusement.

When Leicester had finished, the Queen spoke. She looked at the lords standing round her and said, "We have one piece of royal justice to attend to. It is a piece of justice that interests us as a woman and mother of the English people."

Then turning to Leicester she said, "We speak of the matter that concerns Varney and Tressilian. Is the lady here, my lord?"

remorseful: full of deep regret for wrong-doing; canopy: covering held on poles over a throne

Leicester was ready with his answer. "Gracious madam; she is not."

"Our orders were strict, my lord," said the Queen sternly.

"And would have been obeyed, my queen," replied Leicester. Then looking round for Varney he said, "Varney, step forward. This gentleman will inform Your Grace, why the lady could not be present."

Varney said that the lady was ill and therefore could not be present as ordered by the Queen.

"Here," he said, "are certificates from the learned physician, Alasco, and another from Master Anthony Foster in whose house she is at present living."

Both the certificates said that the lady was ill, and so, unfit to make the long journey from near Oxford to Kenilworth.

The Queen took the certificates and read them. Then she said, "Let Tressilian come forward." When Tressilian came and stood in front of her, she continued, "Master Tressilian, we have great sympathy for you. Our power as Queen is great; but there are some things beyond even our control. We cannot for example command a young girl to love one person and not another. We cannot also control illness. The young lady, Amy Robsart or Amy Varney, is ill. She cannot, therefore, attend our court here, as we had commanded her to do. Here are certificates from her physician and from the gentleman in whose house she lives."

Tressilian, who knew where Amy was at that very moment, was shocked at the lies told to the Queen. For a moment he forgot his own promise to Amy and exclaimed, "These certificates do not give the true facts!"

"How, sir?" said the Queen, "do you doubt even my Lord of Leicester's word? Take these certificates and read them carefully. Then, if you still say that they are not true, you will have to produce some proof for saying so."

Tressilian took the certificates in his hands and thought

quickly. He wanted to keep his promise to Amy, and at the same time, he did not want to say anything that might spoil his case.

"Madam," he said after a great deal of hesitation, "Those who have produced these certificates should prove that they are true."

The Queen turned to Leicester and asked, "My Lord of Leicester, what evidence have you regarding these certificates?"

Before Leicester could reply, Varney, who had come prepared for such a situation, spoke. He said that two persons present before the Queen would give evidence that the certificates were true.

The Earl of Oxford said that he knew Anthony Foster and the certificate was in Anthony Foster's own handwriting. Doctor Masters said he knew Doctor Alasco very well and had consulted him sometimes.

The Queen thought that this must satisfy Tressilian. But Tressilian rushed forward, knelt down and caught the skirt of the Queen's robe. He pleaded, "Grant me one request. Do not decide this matter now, hastily. Give me twenty-four hours and I shall produce evidence to prove that the certificates are false.—These certificates, which state that the unhappy lady is ill in Oxfordshire."

The Queen was now very annoyed with Tressilian. She wanted to know why he insisted on saying that the certificates were false. Tressilian could give no satisfactory answer. He feared that Amy would be in serious trouble, if he broke his promise to her.

The Queen, when she could get no satisfactory answer, thought Tressilian was going out of his mind. She ordered his friend Raleigh to take him away and to see that he did not trouble her again.

out of his mind: mad

The Queen now turned her attention to another matter. Some time ago, the Earl of Leicester had requested the Queen to show special favour to Varney by making him a knight. She now decided to confer this honour on Varney.

She said to Leicester, "Your sword, my Lord of Leicester."

Leicester unbuckled his sword and on bended knee presented it to the Queen. Elizabeth, on taking the sword, drew it from its scabbard and admired its beauty. She then said. "Richard Varney, come forward and kneel down. In the name of God and Saint George, we dub you knight." Saying these words, she touched the kneeling Varney on his shoulder with the sword; and continued, "Be faithful, brave and fortunate—Arise, Sir Richard Varney."

Varney stood up and bowed low to his Sovereign, who had done so much honour to him. He then stepped back.

"The rest of the ceremonies shall be completed in the chapel tomorrow." said the Queen. She then asked Sussex to name one of his followers he wished to be made a knight.

Sussex would have liked to suggest the name of Tressilian; but that was impossible, as the Queen had taken a strong dislike to him. So he said, "Master Nicholas Blount is a gentleman well deserving of the honour."

The ladies of the court wanted to please the Queen and asked that the honour should also be conferred on Walter Raleigh. Young Raleigh was a great favourite at court, so the Queen was very pleased and readily agreed.

"Let the two step forward," she said, and the honour of knighthood was conferred on both.

The company now made its way to the banqueting-

confer: give as favour; scabbard: covering for the blade; Saint George: patron saint of England; dub: make a knight by touching him on the shoulder with the blade of a sword; chapel: a place for Christian worship in a large private house, school, etc.; banqueting-hall: a very large room where elaborate meals (banquets) to celebrate a special event are held

hall. The banquet was on a grand scale and Leicester had taken care to see that everything was done to please the Queen.

All this time, poor Amy sat alone in her small room. The uncertainty of her position filled her with fear, anxiety and grief. For a long time, she sat at the window listening to the joyous shouting, cheering and the ringing of the bells. The fireworks lit up her room with flashes of coloured lights. For a while forgetting her own grief, she watched the display.

Sadly she said to herself, "O Leicester! You have again and again sworn that Amy was your love, your life. Yet today, Amy, the Countess, has no part in the festivities which are arranged and organized at *your* command and in *your* Castle. She sits here an outcast, if not a prisoner!"

As the hours went by the sound of revelry died away. Amy moved from the window. She made sure the door was locked and then placed the small table, which was in the room, against the door. Feeling safer, she lay down on the bed. For a while she kept thinking of herself and what would happen to her. Then at last she slept.

18 The Queen Meets Amy

Next morning, the sound of a bugle awoke Countess Amy. For some time she lay in bed thinking. "He does not think of me," she told herself. "The Queen is his guest and he has no time for me. He does not care if I pine in doubt and despair in a remote corner of this huge Castle."

Just then, there were loud noises in the room below and outside her own room. She could distinctly hear Michael Lambourne's voice. Amy was thoroughly alarmed. She

display: show; outcast: a person driven out from home or society; pine: waste away through sorrow; remote: far away

threw her cloak over her shoulders, and covered her head and face. She waited till the voices moved away. Then, at the first opportunity, she ran down the stairs and into a garden, which was close by.

Amy had seen this garden from the window of her room. It was a large garden with statues, fountains, shady trees and tall thick bushes. She felt she would be safer there than in the little room. She moved far into a grotto and sat down on a bench close to a fountain. She washed her face and tidied herself. She then sat quietly waiting for some chance of rescue.

One of the earliest risers that morning was the Queen herself. She walked out of her room and into the garden. By chance, she walked into the grotto where Amy was seated. She saw a female figure seated near a fountain. The figure was so still that at first Elizabeth thought that it was a statue; but moving closer, she saw it was a young woman.

"Fair Nymph of this lovely grotto," said the Queen, "why are you so silent? Is it fear that has made you dumb? Speak! we command you."

Amy at once knew who was in front of her. The unfortunate Countess dropped on her knee before the Queen. Clasping her palms together, she looked at the Queen. Her eyes were full of fear and she looked so helpless, that Queen Elizabeth was deeply moved.

"What does this mean?" she asked. "Stand up, maiden! What do you want from us?"

"Your protection, madam," said the unhappy woman.

"Each daughter of England has it, if she is worthy of it. Why and in what manner do you wish us to protect you?"

grotto: a cave-like shelter made in a garden; rescue: make safe from danger; nymph: goddess living in rivers, trees, etc.—also a beautiful young woman

The unfortunate Countess dropped on her knee before the Queen.

Amy thought quickly. She wanted to make sure of her own safety, without in any way endangering her husband. After all that she had passed through, her mind was confused and she could not think clearly. The Queen had to repeat her question more than once. At last, Amy spoke and just said, "Alas! I do not know."

"This is silly, madam," said Elizabeth, impatiently. "A sick man must tell his doctor what his illness is! Besides, we are not used to asking a question so many times before receiving an answer!"

Desperate now, Amy stammered out, "I beg your protection—against—against one Varney."

"What Varney—Sir Richard Varney—the servant of Lord Leicester? What are you to him or he to you?"

"I—I—was his prisoner; and he tried to kill me. I escaped and came to—"

"To ask for my protection, doubtless," said Elizabeth. "You shall have it, if you deserve it." She again looked at Amy very carefully and then said, "Are you not Amy, the daughter of Sir Hugh Robsart of Lidcote Hall?"

"Forgive me—forgive me, most gracious Queen!" was all that Amy could say.

"For what should I forgive you, silly girl?" said Elizabeth. "Surely you are brain-sick, child! You deceived your old father; cheated Master Tressilian and married this same Varney."

Amy sprang to her feet and interrupted the Queen. "No, Madam, no! As there is God above us, I am not the miserable creature you would make me! I am not the wife of that contemptible slave—that villain! I am not the wife of Varney!"

endangering: putting in danger; desperate: filled with despair and ready to do anything; stammered: spoke haltingly; brain-sick: mad; contemptible: deserving of contempt or scorn, despised

Seeing so much passion and feeling, the Queen was surprised, and stood silent for a while. Then she said, "Why, woman, you can talk fast enough when the subject moves you!"

Elizabeth was now beginning to realise that, perhaps, Leicester and Varney had not been honest with her. She turned to Amy again and said, "Tell me, woman, for I *will* know, whose wife are you? Speak out and be quick!"

Dragged so far, and given not a moment to think, all that poor Amy could say was, "The Earl of Leicester knows it all."

"The Earl of Leicester!" said Elizabeth, with growing anger. "Come with me—come with me, instantly! You shall be heard in his presence." With these words, the Queen seized Amy's arm and dragged her quickly from the grotto and out of the garden.

Leicester was at that moment standing with a group of lords and ladies waiting for the Queen.

The Queen advanced towards the group with quick steps dragging Amy, who was almost paralysed with terror. With her free hand she moved everyone out of the way. When she stood face to face with Leicester, she said, "Do you know this woman?"

Leicester turned pale and was so confused to see his wife with Elizabeth, that he could not utter a word.

Receiving no immediate answer, she spoke in a loud voice trembling with passion, "Leicester, have you been deceiving me, your Sovereign? If you have, then your head is in great danger of falling. Marshal, arrest him!"

Amy, seeing her husband's great danger, found courage. She forgot the wrongs done to her and her own serious position. She knelt before the Queen and embraced her knees.

paralysed: no power to move; terror: great fear: confused: mixed up in his mind: passion: strong feeling of anger; Marshal: an officer of the royal household

She said, "He is guiltless, madam. He is guiltless, the noble Leicester!"

"Why, woman," answered the Queen, "did you not say that the Earl of Leicester knew your whole story?"

"Did I say so?" repeated the unhappy Amy. "Oh, if I did, I have wronged him!"

"Woman!" said Elizabeth, "I will know who put you up to do this!"

At this moment, Leicester was moved by the thoughtfulness and kindness of his wife and felt ashamed of his own behaviour. He was going to declare his marriage and to declare himself the lawful protector of the Countess, when Varney rushed into the presence of the Queen. The moment Leicester saw Varney his good resolutions vanished. He was certain Varney would find a solution; and he did not have to do anything.

Varney knelt before the Queen and said, "Pardon my Sovereign, pardon! Let me be punished, but spare my noble, generous master!"

Amy uttered a faint scream when she saw Varney. She begged her Majesty to shut her up in the darkest dungeon and to punish her as she pleased. She begged to be saved from the shameless villain, Varney.

"And why?" asked the Queen, moved by Amy's distress. "What has he done to you?"

"Oh, what he has done, is worse than bringing sorrow and pain. He has brought about disharmony where there should be peace. I shall go mad if I look longer on him!"

"I think you have already lost your mind, poor woman!" said the Queen, full of pity. She then turned to Lord Hunsdon, who, besides being her cousin, was one of her old

vanished: suddenly disappeared; solution: way of dealing with a difficulty; moved: affected with pity; disharmony: discord, lack of agreement

and faithful lords. She said, "My Lord Hunsdon, look after this poor, distressed young woman. Keep her somewhere safe in your charge. No one should be allowed to see her except our physician Doctor Masters. I shall see her again later."

"Madam, she is safe with me as one of my own daughters. She is a lovely child and I shall see that no harm comes to her." With these words he took Amy, who had almost fainted, in his strong arms and carried her away.

The Queen now turned to Varney and said, "Speak, Sir Richard, and explain these riddles."

The clever villain was only waiting to be asked and quickly told his own story. "Your Majesty's sharp eyes have already detected the cruel illness of my beloved lady. I have been so unhappy about it, that I would not allow any mention of it in the certificate of her physician."

"Is she then out of her mind?" said the Queen. "We do not doubt it. From the moment I found her in the grotto, she has behaved in a strange manner—How did she come here? Why was she not properly looked after?"

"My gracious Sovereign," said Varney, "the gentleman in whose charge I left her, Master Anthony Foster, has just come to Kenilworth. He travelled, as fast as man and horse could possibly travel, to bring me the news of the lady's escape. If Your Majesty wishes, I can call him here."

"Nay, not just now," said the Queen. "Your lady complained bitterly about you, and almost fainted when she saw you."

"Madam, it is her disordered mind that makes her believe that I am her greatest enemy, and out to destroy her," said Varney.

The Queen stopped Varney from saying anything further.

riddles: puzzling questions; detected: discovered, found out; disordered: disturbed

"She will remain in Lord Hunsdon's charge as I have ordered. You have my permission to see her; if there has been a quarrel between you and your wife, you may make it up without further trouble to ourselves."

With these words the Queen went out and joined the lords and ladies waiting for her. She spent the rest of the morning hunting in the large grounds of Kenilworth, where there was plenty of game.

19 Meeting Between Husband and Wife

As soon as Leicester was free from his duties as host, he told Varney that he wished to see Amy. Varney tried to dissuade him, but he insisted.

Leicester was angry with Amy for disobeying his orders and coming to Kenilworth. Of course, he knew only what Varney had told him, and naturally Varney had not mentioned how he had tried to poison Amy.

"You can go to Amy freely, so I shall come as your servant," Leicester told Varney. "Give me a plain cloak and we shall use the private passage, without the risk of meeting anyone."

Varney had to obey. Leicester threw the cloak round him and pulled his cap well over his brows. The guard at the door allowed them to pass. They quickly entered the room and shut the door.

Countess Amy was startled by the opening of the door. She hastily turned round and seeing Varney exclaimed, "Wretch! Have you come with some new plan of villainy?"

Leicester dropped his cloak and spoke firmly, "It is with me, madam, that you will deal, and not with Sir Richard Varney."

game: animals killed for sport—in England they are deer, fox or rabbit; dissuade: to advise against; startled: given a shock of surprise

"Dudley!" she cried out in a joyous voice. "Dudley, have you come at last?" She ran to her husband and, ignoring the presence of Varney, she threw her arms round him. She began to weep and said, "Oh, Dudley! I have been ill—very ill—and in serious danger. But you have come and now all will be well."

"Alas, Amy, you have destroyed me!"

"I, my lord?" said Amy turning pale. "How could I? I, who love you better than myself!"

"Are you not here against my strict commands? And doesn't your presence here put both of us in danger?"

"Does it, does it, indeed!" she cried eagerly. "Then why am I here a moment longer? Oh, if you only knew how frightened I was at Cumnor Place and why I was forced to leave it!—But, I will not talk about myself. I do not want to return to that horrible place; yet, if it is a question of your safety—"

"We will think of another place, Amy," said Dudley, moved by her words. "You will go to one of my Northern Castles and for a short time, I hope, as Varney's wife."

Moving away from Dudley, and in a sad voice, Amy spoke, "Is this your dishonourable advice to your wife? I should acknowledge myself the wife of another—and of all men, Varney?"

"Madam, I am very serious! Varney is my true and faithful servant, trusted with my deepest secrets. Just now, I would more willingly lose my right hand, than lose him. You have no reason to scorn him as you do."

"I can give you one very good reason, my lord. But, if he is necessary to you for your safety, then I shall say nothing. However, I will not go with him unless I am

destroyed: put an end to

taken away by force, and I will not acknowledge him my husband!"

"It is only for a short time, madam, said Leicester. "There is no other remedy. I command you."

"My conscience and my honour are against it, my lord. I will *not*, in this instance, obey you. I will not go about as the wife of this shameless, wicked fellow—your servant Varney!"

There was dead silence. Leicester stood still, displeased but uncertain. Varney tried to look humble and sorrowful. He lowered his head and looked down.

It was then that Countess Amy showed her true character and spirit. She went up to Leicester and spoke in a calm, clear voice.

"Will your lordship now hear what a young, timid woman, but your most affectionate wife, can suggest?—Be a true English gentleman, knight and earl, who holds truth and honour dearer than life itself. Take your ill-fated wife by the hand; lead her to Elizabeth's throne. There say, 'In a moment of weakness, I gave my hand to this Amy Robsart.' You will have done justice to me then, and to your own honour. If you afterwards desire to part from me, I shall not oppose it. I shall return to my father's home and there, hide my grieved and broken heart. You can then show a little patience and Amy's life will not long darken your path to success."

Deeply moved by these words, Leicester said, "Amy! Oh, you do not know the intrigues at court! — The Queen threatened to take my head. Let her try. I have friends and I can appeal to them. I will fight."

"Oh, my good lord," said his wife, "do not bring war to a peaceful country! Our best friends are truth and honour.

remedy: way out of a difficult situation; character: qualities of which a person is made; timid: shy, easily frightened; intrigues: making and carrying out secret plans and plots

Bring only these to your help and you are safe. Leave these behind you and all other defences will be useless. Truth, my lord, needs no armour for its protection!"

"Do not argue with me, Amy, on how I shall make my confession as safe as possible. Farewell, you shall hear from me, soon." He embraced her; then he left wrapping his cloak round him as before and accompanied by Varney.

As he came away, Varney started thinking. His patron, Leicester, had become a great favourite of the Queen. Many people believed that she would soon ask him to marry her and be King! Once Leicester became King, great things were possible for himself too. Now, Amy had made Leicester change his mind, and he was going to ruin everything by declaring his marriage. Varney, therefore, decided that Amy was in their way and must die!

20 Varney Tells Lies

As soon as Leicester returned to his rooms, he sat down at his table with some writing material. He spoke aloud, partly to himself and partly to Varney.

"There are many in high positions, who will help me." He then wrote down the names of all the lords on whose support he could depend. "My grandfather and my father need not have lost their heads, if they had boldly decided to fight. A tree with deep roots is not easily torn up by a tempest. — Why are you looking so sad, Varney?"

"Alas!" said Varney, and continued to look sad.

"Alas!" repeated Leicester, "and why alas, Sir Richard? Is this all you can say when a noble struggle is about to start? Or, does *alas* mean that you do not want to fight? If that is so, then you may leave the Castle or go and join my enemies!"

tempest: storm with strong winds and rain

"Not so, my lord," he replied. "Varney will be found fighting or dying by your side. But, forgive me, if I see the difficulties with which you are surrounded and speak plainly about them. You are strong, my lord, and powerful, only as long as the Queen shows her favours. While you are Elizabeth's favourite, you are almost a sovereign; but the moment she stops showing her favours, you will lose all your power. Even in your own Castle you will become a prisoner; perhaps, a prisoner sentenced to death, if she so orders!"

Varney, in his turn, named all the powerful lords, who had dared to rise against the Queen and were now dead. He continued, "Elizabeth's throne is not like other thrones. It is supported by the love and affection of the people. You may share it with her if you like; but you cannot overthrow it!"

On hearing these words, Leicester pushed aside the writing material and said, "It may be as you say; but, I do not care. I will not fall without a struggle. Go, prepare my men and followers and let them be armed. At a given signal they must overpower the Queen's men as well as the Yeomen of the Guard."

Varney, pretending to look even sadder, said, "My lord, I shall certainly obey your orders; but what you've asked me to do is an act of high treason."

"I do not care! I do not care! Shame is behind me; ruin is before me; I must go on!" said Leicester in a desperate voice.

There was a long pause, which was at last broken by the clever villain. "My lord, you have been the best and the kindest of masters, and now you are about to destroy yourself. I must, therefore, speak of a matter that I've known,

are surrounded with: have on all sides; overpower: overcome, be too strong for; pretending: showing falsely

but hidden deep in my heart — Yes, I will speak even if you kill me for doing so!

"What is it that you want to say?" asked the Earl. "We have no time to waste on words. It is now time to act."

"What I have to say will not take long. My lord, am I right in saying that your marriage is the only cause of your trouble with your Sovereign?"

"You know it is. So, why ask a useless question?" said Leicester impatiently.

"Men will risk their lands and lives for a rich diamond, my lord; but would it not be wise to examine the diamond first and make sure it has no flaws?"

"What do you mean?" said Leicester sternly. "About whom do you dare to speak?"

"It is of the Countess Amy, my lord, I am unhappily bound to speak; and I will speak even if your lordship were to kill me for it!"

"Speak, I shall hear you," said Leicester.

"I do not like the way in which this lady has been deceiving you. You know that Edmund Tressilian was interested in the lady. He wanted to marry her, before you did. They have both planned to force you to declare your marriage. From the beginning my lady knew of the petition that was made to the Queen."

"This talk is madness, Varney! Where and how could they communicate with each other?"

"My lord," said Varney, "unfortunately I can show that very easily. Just before the petition was made to the Queen, I was greatly surprised to meet Tressilian leaving Cumnor Place by the side gate."

"Villain, you met him, you say, and why did you not strike him dead?" exclaimed Leicester.

flaws defects that lessen the value of a thing

"We drew our swords and if my foot had not slipped, I would have killed him. Lambourne saw the fight and Anthony Foster saw Tressilian at Cumnor Place. If you doubt, my lord, you may ask them."

Leicester was so surprised to hear this, that for some time he could not say anything. At last he said, "And why was I not told about this visit?"

"I thought the Countess would herself tell you about it," said Varney. "I have further information, my lord. Before leaving Cumnor, Tressilian got the landlord of the inn to help him and plotted the escape of the lady. Tressilian sent his man to Cumnor. Here is Tressilian's ring which was given to the landlord for his help. I am sure your lordship must have seen it on Tressilian's hand.

"Tressilian's man entered Cumnor Place as a pedlar. He planned my lady's escape with her and brought her to this Castle. Where does the lady go immediately? She goes and hides in Tressilian's apartment!"

"How do I know that what you are telling me is true?" demanded Leicester.

"You may ask the usher who took them to Tressilian's room, my lord," said Varney. Here is one of my lady's gloves, which was found in Tressilian's room. I am sure you will recognize it."

"I do, I do recognize it!" said Leicester. "The gloves were my own gift. The other glove was still on her hand. I noticed it, when she threw her arm round my neck, a little while ago." Leicester was greatly agitated and said, "I see it all now. She has deceived me! She has been plotting and planning behind my back; and for this same woman I was about to give up everything.

"Yet, how honestly and sincerely she begged me to act with honour and declare my marriage. Is it possible that

gloves: covering of leather or knitted wool for the hands

all this time she was deceiving me, or is she really innocent?"

The crafty villain, Varney, wanting to put an end to all his master's doubts, said, "My lord, why did my lady take the risk of coming here? Why didn't she go to her father's house, where she would have been perfectly safe? Do you not think that her only object in coming here was to force you to declare your marriage?"

"True, true, true!" Leicester cried out. "I see it all now." She wanted my lands and property. If the Queen in her anger had ordered me to be beheaded and I were out of the way, it would be all hers as my widow. I will have her blood! She shall die the death of a traitress!"

Varney readily agreed with his master and said, "Yes, my lord, she has deserved death and she must die."

"Yes, she must die," said Leicester.

Varney then asked for Leicester's signet-ring. He would have to show the ring to the other servants, whose help he must take. The ring would prove that he was truly carrying out his lord's commands.

Leicester removed the ring from his finger and gave it to Varney.

* * * * * *

In the evening after the banquet, Doctor Masters reported to the Queen that the lady, Amy Varney, was sullen and would not answer his questions. She talked a lot, which made no sense, and kept saying that she would soon see Her Majesty and tell her everything and to no one else. Masters said that she was truly mentally ill. The best thing would be to send her away from Kenilworth in the care of her husband. There was too much noise and excite-

doubts: uncertainties of mind; beheaded: have one's head cut off as punishment; traitress: a woman who betrays a friend and behaves like a traitor; signet-ring: a ring with a seal on it, used instead of a signature; sullen: bad tempered

ment at Kenilworth; and such people needed peace and quiet.

When the Queen heard the report of Doctor Masters, she did not want to see Amy again and gave Varney permission to remove his wife from Kenilworth.

Varney did not want to waste any more time. He decided to leave that very night. He sent for Michael Lambourne; but Lambourne had gone out and could not be found. He therefore took the help of another servant, called Robin Tider, and ordered him to saddle three horses and to prepare a horse-litter. He was told to wait at the side gate of the Castle.

Varney himself went to wake up Anthony Foster and asked him to get ready for the journey. As soon as Foster was ready, they went to Countess Amy's room.

On the way, Varney told Foster, "The lady must come with us, even if she screams and we have to use force."

"But if we use force, what will the Earl say?" asked Anthony Foster.

"Don't worry, man! Here is my master's signet-ring to prove that I have his orders."

As they entered the room, Amy sat up in bed. Varney spoke immediately, "Madam, my lord of Leicester has ordered that you return to Cumnor Place. See, here is his signet-ring in token of his commands."

"It is false!" said the Countess. "You have stolen the ring. You are capable of any villainy, the blackest and basest."

"It is *true*, madam," replied Varney; "if you do not get up and dress for the journey at once, we shall have to use force."

On hearing these words Amy started screaming loudly. Lord Hunsdon and others would have rushed to her; but

saddle: to place the leather seat on a horse; horse-litter: a couch with curtains in which a person may be carried by horses; token: in proof of, as a sign of; basest: most dishonourable

the story that she was insane was now believed by those in the Castle; besides, Varney had the Queen's permission to take her away.

When she found that no one came to her help, Amy became quiet and did what she was told. Weeping, trembling and praying, the unfortunate lady dressed and followed Varney and Foster to the side gate, where Tider already stood waiting.

Amy was placed in the litter and carried away from Kenilworth. For a long time she turned and looked at the towers of the Castle, till they were out of sight.

21 The Meeting Between Leicester and Tressilian

For the evening's entertainment Leicester had arranged a masque. Everyone was gathered in the great hall to see this splendid masque relating England's history from the time of the Romans.

Halfway through the programme Leicester moved to the far end of the hall, where the crowd was difficult to control. Here, he felt his cloak being pulled, and a voice whispered, "My lord, I wish to speak to you, immediately."

Leicester turned to see who was the speaker. The man was dressed simply and wore a mask, so could not be recognized.

"Who are you and what do you want with me?" Leicester asked.

"I am Edmund Tressilian of Cornwall," answered the masked man. "I had promised that for twenty-four hours I

were out of sight: could not be seen; masque: play in verse acted in castles and large houses in England in the 16th and 17th centuries—actors wore masks. (Introduced from Italy in the reign of Henry VIII, the father of Elizabeth I); whispered: spoke very softly

would not do or say anything. That period is now over. As the matter concerns your honour, I desire to speak to you first."

"What do you wish to talk about, Master Edmund Tressilian?" asked Leicester.

"Justice, my lord," answered Tressilian calmly but firmly "I must speak to you tonight, so, may I see you in your chamber?"

"No," answered Leicester, "not in my room. You will meet me in the garden, when the Queen has retired to her chamber."

"Very well," said Tressilian and went away.

The festivities ended at midnight and the party broke up. The Queen retired to her chamber.

Leicester went to his room and asked for Varney. The messenger returned to inform him that Sir Richard Varney had left the Castle, an hour ago, by the side gate. There were three other persons with him, one of whom was carried in a litter.

"How could he leave after the gates were shut for the night?" asked Leicester.

In reply the messenger said, "Sir Richard gave satisfactory reasons and showed your worship's signet—"

"True, true," said the Earl, "but he should not have been in such a hurry. Are any of his attendants still in the Castle?"

"Michael Lambourne, my lord. He is just preparing to leave," said the man.

"Ask him to come here immediately. I have a message for his master."

While the messenger went to call Michael Lambourne, Leicester walked up and down his room, deep in thought. Feelings of doubt, guilt and remorse came to him. He said to himself, "Varney, I think, loves me; but has his own ambitious plans to serve. If I rise, he rises; so, he is very

keen to free me from the obstacle which stands between me and sovereignty. Yet, I cannot stoop to his low plans. She must be punished, I know; but it must be some other way. I will first deal with Tressilian."

He went to his table and sat down to write a letter to Varney. He ordered Varney not to do anything regarding the Countess till further orders. She should be taken to Cumnor Place and safely left there. Varney should return to Kenilworth immediately. Leicester further commanded Varney to return his signet-ring at once by a trusted messenger.

As he finished the letter Michael Lambourne entered, dressed and ready for the journey. Leicester hastily sealed the letter and, giving it to Lambourne, said, "Go, ride as fast as you can and give this letter carefully into Sir Richard Varney's hands. It is very important, so there must be no delay."

Lambourne left the Earl's room a little disappointed. When the Earl himself had called him, Lambourne thought that he was wanted for some very important work. As he went down, he looked at the letter, which was carelessly sealed, and wondered why it was so important. In the courtyard he said to himself, "I will have a look into the letter and find out what message the Earl is sending to Varney."

With an easier mind, Leicester went down to meet Tressilian, as soon as Lambourne had left his apartment. He said to himself as he walked towards the garden, "I have suffered a great deal and yet I have decided not to take instant revenge. There are other ways of bringing about an end to a marriage, than taking a life." These thoughts helped Leicester to satisfy his conscience.

Tressilian was waiting in the garden; and as there was a full moon Leicester had no difficulty in finding him. When

obstacle: something in the way that stops progress: instant: immediate, at once

they were face to face. Leicester said in a cold, hard voice, "You desired a secret meeting with me, sir. I am here and ready to listen."

"I will speak, then," said Tressilian. "I want to speak to you about the unhappy Amy Robsart. Her unworthy husband had confined her in a lonely, dangerous place from which she escaped and came here. Now, again, she has been removed from here and I am afraid her life is in danger. You must prevent this, my lord. I am speaking on behalf of her father. The unfortunate marriage must be declared and proofs placed before the Queen. After that the lady must be free to go where she likes. This concerns no one's honour more than your lordship's."

"I have heard you, Master Tressilian," Leicester said, "Now, villain, draw and defend yourself." With these words he struck Tressilian with the sheathed sword. Then, drawing it out, he stood ready. Tressilian, too, drew his sword, and the fight began. Both men were very good swordsmen and equally matched.

In the silence of the night the clash of swords was heard by the guards on duty. They hurried to find out who was fighting. As their footsteps approached, Leicester and Tressilian stopped fighting, and walked away deep into the shadow of the trees. Fighting duels had been strictly forbidden by the Queen, and anyone who was caught disobeying was punished by having his hand cut off.

After the guards moved away, Leicester and Tressilian entered the Castle. Before parting Leicester said to Tressilian, "If you wish to continue the fight, be close to me when the Queen holds court tomorrow. At a convenient time I shall give you a signal."

"I have no choice, since you decided to insult me by striking me on the shoulder with your sheathed sword! I will be present in court and watch for your signal," said Tressilian.

22 The Truth, At Last !

The next morning, for the amusement of the Queen and the other guests, the men of Coventry were dramatizing the old wars between the English and the Danes.

Everyone was in the hall watching the scenes. The Queen too was busy watching and talking to Sussex and Hunsdon. At this point Leicester signalled to Tressilian and both quietly slipped out of the hall.

Leicester led the way to a cluster of trees behind which stood a servant with two horses. Leicester jumped on one of these horses and asked Tressilian to take the other. The Earl led the way and they rode fast to a quiet place, which was a mile from the Castle. Here, they dismounted.

Both drew their swords as Tressilian spoke, "My lord, I am known to be a person who respects honour and would not fear to die for it. So, may I ask, why you chose to insult me last night?"

"If you do not like my scorn, then do not waste any time, or I will repeat the insult!" said Leicester.

"That is not necessary, my lord," said Tressilian. "May God judge between us! And your blood, if you fall, will be on your own head."

After this, both fought desperately and for their lives. In the course of the fight Tressilian's sword fell from his hand and he himself fell on the ground. Leicester immediately held his sword two inches from his throat and, placing his foot on Tressilian's chest, asked him to confess the wrongs he had done the Earl.

Tressilian boldly answered, "I have no wrongs to confess

an inch: 2.5 cm

After this, both fought desperately and for their lives.

and I have given you no cause for this. I am better prepared to die than you are!"

"No cause! No cause!" cried the Earl, getting very excited. "Die a liar as you have lived!" With these words he drew his arm back to strike the fatal blow, when it was suddenly seized from behind.

Leicester turned in anger to see a boy hanging on to his arm. It was with great difficulty that Leicester was able to free his arm. By this time Tressilian had managed to rise and retrieve his sword. Both would have fought again, but the boy, who was none other than Dickie Sludge, clung to Leicester's knees, and begged him to listen to him.

"Let me go," said Leicester. "Why do you interfere with us?"

"My stupid mistake is the cause of your quarrel. Please, if you want to live in peace for the rest of your life, just read this letter and then do what you wish." Saying this, Dickie placed a letter in Leicester's hands.

The Earl very angry at being disturbed for the second time, snatched the letter from Dickie's hands. As soon as he saw the handwriting, he turned pale and read the letter leaning against a tree trunk. The letter was the one which Amy had written on her arrival at Kenilworth.

In the letter Amy had clearly written about all that had happened at Cumnor Place, and why she was forced to leave it. She told Leicester why she had taken shelter in a small room in the tower and asked for proper apartments. She promised to do anything that Leicester asked her to do. All she wanted was not to be placed under the control or protection of Varney.

The letter dropped from Leicester's hands, when he had read it.

"Take my sword," he said to Tressilian, "and pierce my heart, as I would have pierced yours!"

"My lord, you have done me great wrong," said Tressi-

lian. "But something told me that there was a mistake and you were misguided."

"Mistake indeed!" said Leicester. "I have been made to believe a villain to be a man of honour, and the best and purest of creatures to be a lying, scheming, wicked woman!"

He turned to Dickie and asked in an angry voice, "Wretched boy, why is this letter brought to me now?"

"I dare not tell you, my lord," said Dickie, moving away in fear. "But here comes one who was the messenger."

Wayland, who had just reached the spot, told Leicester all that had happened; how he had helped Amy to escape and come to Kenilworth. He told Leicester how, on her arrival, Amy had made eager enquiries about the Earl from the servants.

"The villain!" exclaimed Leicester. "Oh, that worst of villains, Varney! And she is even now in his power!

"But I hope with no commands from you that would put her life in danger!" said Tressilian.

"No, no, no," Leicester said hastily. "I said something in madness, but last night I sent a messenger with other orders and she is now safe."

"Yes," said Tressilian, "she *must* be safe and I *must* be assured of her safety."

"Sir, I am her husband. Her misguided, blind and most unworthy husband; but, her husband, all the same! She is Countess of Leicester, as I am the Earl. I will see that justice is done to her."

"My lord, I mean you no harm," Tressilian calmly answered. "But as, all this time, you've been hiding behind the cloak of the wicked Varney, my duty to Sir Hugh Robsart forces me to carry this matter to the Queen. Amy must be

scheming: cunning, crafty; assured: sure, confident; misguided: foolish and wrong; unworthy: not deserving

acknowledged Countess in her royal presence."

"You will not need to do this, sir. Do not dare to interfere! No voice but mine shall admit Dudley's dishonest misdeeds. I will go to Elizabeth and tell her everything, and then I shall leave for Cumnor Place with all speed." With these words, he rode away towards the Castle.

Tressilian untied his own horse and was about to follow Leicester, when Dickie spoke. "Take me with you, Master Tressilian. I have not told my whole story, and I need your protection."

Tressilian placed the boy on the saddle in front of him and rode towards the Castle. Dickie told him that he was sorry he had taken away the letter. He had done it out of mischief and because Wayland would not tell him who the lady was. Later, when he saw that the letter was addressed to the Earl of Leicester himself, he became very frightened. He looked everywhere for Wayland, but could not find him. He thought that he would try to give it to the Earl in the evening. But again, he did not succeed.

This morning, in the crowd, Dickie saw Wayland. The boy took Wayland aside and told him everything. As they were talking, Dickie's sharp eyes saw Leicester and Tressilian leave the Castle. Both followed in the direction taken by the riders. Fortunately, Dickie arrived just in time to save Tressilian's life. They reached the Castle, as the boy finished his story.

Blount was waiting for Tressilian and told him that the Queen wanted to see him.

"What is the matter?" Tressilian asked, as he put the boy down and dismounted.

"No one knows," said Blount. "All we know is that my Lord of Leicester came riding furiously to the Castle and

furiously: in an uncontrolled manner, wildly

demanded to see the Queen alone. He is even now with her and you are wanted."

Tressilian asked Blount to look after the lad and went in with Raleigh, who had also come out to look for him.

As he entered the room Tressilian saw the Queen walking up and down, greatly disturbed. Leicester was kneeling before an empty chair, where Elizabeth had been sitting. Leicester's sword was unfastened and lay on the ground. The Earl Marshal of England stood beside him. Two of Elizabeth's most trusted and senior advisers were also present, looking very troubled.

As soon as the Queen saw Tressilian, she said, "Sir, *you* knew about this affair and have kept silent, thus helping to deceive us!" At that moment Elizabeth was so angry that Tressilian thought it best not to say a word; and just knelt before her.

"Are you dumb, sir?" she demanded. "You knew abou. the whole affair, did you not?"

"No, gracious madam. I did not know that the poor lady was Countess of Leicester—"

"No one shall know her by that name!" Elizabeth interrupted. She will be known only as Amy Dudley, and perhaps, widow of the traitor Robert Dudley!"

"Madam," said Leicester, "do with me as you please; but do not punish this gentleman, for he does not deserve it."

At this moment, Lord Burleigh, one of the statesmen in the room, gently took the Queen aside and tried to calm her. He realized that Elizabeth was deeply hurt. Her eyes had filled with tears, and she was about to start crying. He knew she had begun to love Leicester and had hoped to marry him.

His voice full of sympathy and affection, he said, "Ma-

Burleigh: (pronounced Bur'li)

dam, remember that you are a Queen—Queen of England—mother of your people. Do not give way to this wild storm of passion."

"Burleigh," said Elizabeth, "you are a man, so you do not know, you cannot understand, the scorn and the misery that man has inflicted on me!"

"Madam, I do understand; I do know. I have grown old in your service and all I wish is your glory and happiness. I pray you, be calm. Do not let others guess what they do not know."

After a while, his words had the desired effect and Elizabeth became quiet and her noble, queenly self once again. She approached Leicester and spoke calmly and with dignity.

"My Lord of Leicester, arise and take up your sword. A quarter of an hour's punishment in the custody of our Marshal is, we think, a very light punishment for months and months of falsehood practised on us." She then, went back to her chair and sat down.

"We will now hear a full account of this affair. You, Tressilian, step forward and say what you know."

Tressilian told his story without unnecessarily bringing Leicester into further trouble.

When he had finished, the Queen said, "We will take this Wayland into our service and place the boy, Dickie Sludge, in our Secretary's Office for training. He will learn how to deal with letters there.

"You, Tressilian, did wrong in not coming to us with the whole story, right at the beginning. Yet, having given a promise to the unhappy lady, it was your duty, as a gentleman, to keep it. We respect you for it."

She then turned to Leicester and forced him to tell the story. He did so with great hesitation. He said nothing

passion: strong feeling of anger

about the part when he had agreed with Varney that Amy must be destroyed.

Later, in the presence-chamber, the Queen announced Leicester's marriage. Everyone was surprised.

"It is true," said the Queen; "he had kept this secret even from us. He wanted to give us a surprise when we were his guest at Kenilworth. I can see that you are all very curious to know the name of his wife. She is Amy Robsart, the same lady who in the pageant performed for our amusement, yesterday, acted as the wife of the servant, Varney."

The Queen said this because she thought that she must give some explanation for Leicester's and Varney's behaviour on the previous day. Both had then pretended that Amy was Varney's wife.

She further announced that the revels would continue as celebrations of the marriage. She hoped that this would show to all the people who were present at Kenilworth that Leicester's marriage meant nothing to her.

Leicester now saw his opportunity, and asked the Queen's permission to travel to Cumnor Place.

"Do you wish to go and bring home your wife? That is the right thing to do; but you do not have to go in person, as we are still your guest. Master Tressilian and Sir Walter Raleigh will go to Cumnor Place instead of you." Turning to these two gentlemen she said, "We order you to bring back both Richard Varney and Alasco dead or alive."

"Master Secretary," she ordered, turning to where the Secretary stood, "You will give these gentlemen the necessary warrants for the arrest of both these men.

"Take a sufficient number of guards with you, gentlemen. Bring the lady here in all honour and do not lose any time. God be with you!"

pageant: a public entertainment

Tressilian and Raleigh bowed and left the Royal presence. In a short time they were on their way with all possible speed.

23 Cumnor Place Again

In the litter Amy sat quietly. She knew that any resistance or protest was useless. Foster and Tider rode beside her. She was glad that Varney stayed far behind.

When the party had journeyed about ten miles, Varney heard a rider approaching. He stopped and waited. It was Michael Lambourne. Varney, showing his annoyance, asked where Lambourne had been and why he was so late.

Lambourne said, "Lord Leicester detained me on important business. That should be sufficient explanation for you, who are as much a servant of the Earl as I am."

Varney was surprised by the rude tone of the reply; but let it pass. Then, making sure that nothing they said could be heard by the party moving ahead, he began to tell Lambourne what he wanted him to do. He said that an obstacle which prevented the Earl of Leicester rising to the highest power must be removed. If Lambourne helped him, he would be very generously rewarded.

"What obstacle?" asked Lambourne.

"The load in the litter there," Varney said, pointing to the party moving ahead.

"Look you, Sir Richard," said Lambourne rudely again, "I know my lord's wishes in this matter better than you do! He has trusted me fully and told me everything. He has given me written orders for you." He showed Varney the letter, but did not give it to him. "My lord has also told me to tell you to show the greatest respect to the Countess. His parting words to me were, 'I trust you, Lambourne, to

detained: kept waiting, kept back

see that all my instructions are carried out. You must also bring back immediately my signet-ring.' "

Varney was so surprised that all he could say, was, "Ay, did he really say so? You know everything then, do you?"

"Everything. My lord knows that I am a man of action and can be trusted," said Lambourne with great confidence. "You had better stop treating me as *your* servant."

"Most true," was all that Varney said. He thought quickly and looked ahead on the moonlit road. They were passing through open country. The litter, with its two companions, was at least a mile in front. They could see nothing and would hear nothing. He looked behind him. There was no human being in sight.

Varney spoke to Lambourne again. "Will you then turn against me? I brought you into my lord's service and taught you how to win favours. Will you really turn against your master?"

"You are no longer my master. I am going to be independent from now on!" Michael replied.

"You fool!" said Varney and shot him dead with his pistol.

Lambourne fell from his horse without a sound. Varney calmly dismounted and examined Lambourne's pockets. He turned them inside out so that it would seem that robbers had shot him. He took the Earl's letter and Lambourne's purse, which still had some gold pieces in it. He threw the purse, with the gold pieces, into a river nearby. He reloaded his pistol and rode quickly after the litter. Varney felt greatly satisfied. He had so easily removed a troublesome man, who knew a great deal about his wicked plots and plans. He had also removed the bearer of orders and commands which he had no intentions of obeying. He could now say that he never received my lord's commands.

The rest of the journey was made with speed and the

party arrived at Cumnor Place the night after they had left Kenilworth.

As they approached the house, Foster said, "My lady is very tired."

"Rest will be good for her," said Varney. "We must decide in which room to place her."

"In her own apartments, surely," said Foster. "I have sent Janet away after having given her a good scolding. But the two old women are here to serve the lady."

"We are not going to trust them. We must put her in that strong room, where you keep your gold."

"My gold!" protested Anthony, much alarmed. "What gold? God help me, I have no gold!"

"You stupid fellow! Who thinks of or wants your gold!" said Varney. "I want your bedroom for the lady and you may go and sleep in the lady's grand bedroom. I dare say the Earl will never ask for that furniture and it will be all yours." Foster understood what Varney was trying to tell him.

When Amy got down from the litter, she asked for Janet But Foster said, "I have sent her away, madam. She has learnt too many tricks of lying and escaping!"

Amy was frightened and very weary, so she simply said she would retire to her rooms.

"Ay, ay," said Foster, "but you will not sleep in your rooms tonight. You will sleep in a room where security is better."

"I wish it were my grave," said the Countess.

"You have no need to worry, for my lord will come here tomorrow," said Foster.

Hearing this Amy said with eagerness, "Is he really coming here?"

After this, she refused food and just asked to be taken to the room. The room was in a part of the house where Amy had never been. It was high up, for they climbed

several stairs. Then walking through a narrow passage, they came to a heavy door. This was the miser Foster's room. It was no better than a prison.

Once in the room all Amy asked Foster was, "Can I lock the door from the inside?"

"Most willingly," said Foster, "so long as I can lock it from the outside."

Amy took the lantern and went in.

Varney, who had stayed behind on the stairs, now came up on tiptoe. Foster pointed to a piece of machinery hidden in the wall. It worked silently and smoothly allowing a trap-door in the passage, at the entrance to the room, to fall below.

Varney looked with great attention at the machinery and into the abyss below. Foster assured him in a whisper, that it was very deep.

They then went into the parlour and Varney went to look for Alasco in the laboratory to get some more poison. He returned to tell Foster that Alasco was dead. The old man died working in the laboratory; to the last, trying to make gold.

Varney now asked a few questions about the trap-door.

"That trap-door, Foster, will it remain in place even if the supports underneath are removed?"

"Ay, as long as no one steps on it," said Foster.

"Then if the lady tried to escape over it, will her weight make it fall?" asked Varney.

"The weight of a mouse will do that!" said Foster.

"Well then, she dies trying to escape; and how can you or I help it? Or, be responsible for it?" said Varney with great satisfaction. "When that is done, this property, as I have already told you, will be yours. Let us go to bed, now.

tiptoe: on the tip of one's toes, so as to make no noise; trap-door: a hinged door that opens suddenly, to catch, injure or kill; abyss: a deep hole

Tomorrow, we shall plan it out."

The whole of the next day, Varney did nothing. Amy was very quiet in her room and offered no resistance or protest. She seemed to be resigned to her fate.

In the evening plans were made. Tider and Foster's old servants were sent out. Foster went to Amy's room to see if she wanted anything. At that time he told her he was not going to lock the door from the outside. But, just before leaving he asked Amy not to leave her room on any account until Lord Leicester arrived. Amy promised to be patient. Then, having satisfied his conscience, he removed the supports of the trap-door, while Varney watched. Then, both went into the room below and waited. But, nothing happened. Varney walked up and down the room impatiently and exclaimed, "Surely the woman wants to escape?"

"Perhaps she has decided to wait for her husband," said Foster.

"True! Quite true!" said Varney. "Why did I not think of that before?" Saying this, he rushed out of the room.

Soon, Foster heard the sound of horse's feet in the courtyard and a whistle very like the Earl's was heard. A second later, the door of the Countess's room was heard to open and then the trap-door gave way. There was a rushing sound, a heavy fall, a faint groan, and all was over.

"O God, forgive us!" Foster could not help saying aloud

"You fool!" said Varney, who had just come in and heard Foster. "Our troubles are over and your reward certain. Look down and tell me what you see."

"I see only a heap of white clothes. She is gone!"

"So let our troubles pass," said Varney. "I had no idea that I could imitate the Earl's whistle so well. Let us now think what we should say; the body is to remain where it is."

resigned to her fate: ready to suffer whatever happened without complaining; imitate: copy

But their wicked plans could go no further. Just at that moment Tressilian and Raleigh rushed into the room. Anthony Foster ran away. Varney was arrested on the spot; but he was not sorry for himself or for what he had done. He showed them where Amy's body lay and challenged them to prove that he had anything to do with her death. Later, however, he confessed to Raleigh.

Tressilian was so overcome with grief that Raleigh took charge of all the arrangements.

Varney was made a prisoner and locked up in a room. That night, he swallowed some poison, which he had managed to hide on his person. In the morning he was found dead.

Anthony Foster had gone and locked himself in a secret room, which was not known to others. But, he had forgotten to take the key and no one heard his shouts; so he died a slow death.

News of the Countess's tragic death put a stop to all pleasures at Kenilworth.

Leicester retired from court and for a long time gave himself up to remorse. The Queen at last, asked him to return to court, where he again became a favourite and played his part as a distinguished statesman. His name is mentioned in the history of that period.

Sir Hugh Robsart died very soon after his daughter. He left all his lands and other property to Tressilian.

After rewarding his friends and the old servants of Sir Hugh, Tressilian left the country. With Raleigh, he went to Virginia and died in that foreign land.

Wayland Smith was given service under the Queen and later married Janet.

distinguished: famous, of high standing; Virginia: one of the south-eastern states of the U.S.A.

Questions and Exercises

Chapters 1 & 2

1. Who were the following and what do you learn about each from the first two chapters?
   Giles Gosling; Michael Lambourne; Anthony Foster.
2. Describe Cumnor Place. Why were the villagers curious about the place? What did they want to know?
3. Notice these three sentences:
   (a) Pulling out a purse of gold, Lambourne sat down at a table.
   (b) Having stayed at the inn for the past two days, Tressilian aroused the curiosity of the villagers.
   (c) Hoping that the gate was not locked Lambourne gave it a push.

   In the three sentences above, **participle phrases** are used to combine two short, simple sentences into a longer, simple sentence.
   Example:
   Participle phrase: "pulling out a purse of gold"
   The two short sentences: Lambourne pulled out a purse of gold. He sat down at a table.
   Similarly, combine the following pairs of sentences using the participle phrase.
   (a) He woke up early in the morning.
   He went for a walk.
   (b) Meena took out her books.
   She sat down to study.
   (c) Ranjan finished his home-work quickly.
   He ran out to play cricket.
   (d) Shanti returned home from school.
   She went to get water from the well.

Chapters 3 & 4

1. Who was Tressilian? Why did he come to Cumnor village?
2. Why did Richard Varney come to Cumnor Place? What were his reasons for wanting to keep Amy's marriage a secret?
3. Notice these similes:
   (a) Hearing his voice. she fell back, turning as pale as death.
   (b) She is as beautiful as an angel.
   (c) This wood is as dark as a wolf's mouth.

   Make suitable sentences using the following similes:—brave as a lion; clear as crystal; blind as a bat; sly as a fox; heavy as lead; light as a feather.
4. Notice these sentences:

Your presence in this place is not expected.

Your presence here is also not desired.

These two sentences are combined using neither....nor.... making a single sentence:

Your presence in this place is **neither** expected **nor** desired.

Similarly, combine the pairs of sentences given below into a single sentence using neither....nor....

(a) The library of the monastery was not in use.
It was also not kept in a good condition.

(b) Lambourne did not desire to work against Foster.
He did not desire to be his enemy.

(c) Varney did not want Leicester to know of Tressilian's visit.
He also did not want Leicester to know of his conversation with Amy.

(d) Having given a promise to Leicester, Amy did not want to tell Tressilian about her marriage.

She did not want to go with him to her father's house.

Chapters 5 & 6

1. "Find me very simple clothes to wear this morning?" Why did Leicester say this to Varney? Where was he going?

2. What did Giles Gosling learn about Amy Robsart from Tressilian?

3. Why did Giles Gosling want Tressilian to leave the inn that very night? What did Tressilian do?

4. Notice the use of the word, "decorate" in the following sentences:

   (a) Are you satisfied with the way the rooms have been decorated?

   (b) Medals and decorations mean more to people than the man they adorn.

   In (a) decorate is used as a verb.

   In (b) it is used as a noun by adding the suffix, '— tion'. Similarly, form nouns by adding '— tion' or '— sion' at the end of the following, making any other necessary changes in the spelling of the word.

Verbs	Nouns
(i) declare	
(ii) collect	
(iii) inform	
(iv) examine	
(v) suggest	
(vi) persuade	
(vii) protect	
(viii) describe	
(ix) permit	
(x) prepare	
(xi) invite	

Select any four of the nouns so formed and make sentences using them.

Chapters 7 & 8

1. Who was Wayland Smith? Where did Tressilian meet him? What happened?
2. After hearing Amy's story from Tressilian, what did Sir Hugh Robsart decide to do?
3. Notice the use of "had to", (meaning it was very necessary) in the following sentences:

   (a) Before going further he (Tressilian) had to find a blacksmith, who would shoe his horse.

   (b) After getting off the train, I had to carry my suitcase, as the railway porters were on strike.

   (c) Before going out to play, Rustom had to change his shoes.

   Make three more sentences using "had to", or 'have to' in the same way.

4. Complete the sentences in "B" by using the correct word or phrase from "A". (Remember to use the verb in its correct tense):

A

dismount; juggler; by-lane; practise; with a heavy heart; drawbridge; dangerous mission; sunburnt.

B

(a) To avoid the heavy traffic, I did not go by the highway, but took a narrow ————.

(b) The rider and horse were both tired after a long journey, so near a stream, the rider ———— and decided to rest for half an hour.

(c) After the school picnic the children found that their arms were badly ————.

(d) To be good at any game we must ———— regularly.

(e) A castle usually had a moat and a ———— to protect it against an enemy.

(f) When Tressilian left Lidcote Hall to appeal to the Queen, he was going on a ————.

(g) At the fair, the biggest crowd was round the ———— who amused the visitors with many clever tricks.

(h) Tressilian heard the sad story of Sir Hugh's illness and ———— went into the bedroom to see him.

Chapters 9 & 10

1. What was the matter with the Earl of Sussex? How did Wayland Smith cure him?

2. Why was Raleigh sent with Blount and Tracy to the Palace of Greenwich? What happened when they reached the landing-place below the Palace?

3. Imagine you are one of the ladies-in-waiting on the Queen's barge. Write a letter to your friend telling her about the conversation that took place between the Queen and Walter Raleigh.

4. Complete the table given below :—

Adjectives :

Positive Degree	Comparative Degree	Superlative Degree
(a) tasty		
(b)	higher	
(c)		most pleased
(d)	greater	
(e) responsible		
(f) deep		
(g)	older	
(h) beautiful		
(i)		cleverest
(j) fine		

5. Make sensible sentences from the following table :

	the medicine was not the best		the Queen's wardrobe keeper would give him a new one.
			you must not allow anyone else to interfere.
	the Earl was asleep		
If	Raleigh's cloak was spoilt	then	Wayland Smith rejected it.
	you have surrounded yourself with armed men		you have disobeyed the Queen's orders.
	I take all the risk for the treatment		he was not to be disturbed.

Chapters 11 & 12

1. Describe in one paragraph each, the preparations made by both the Earl of Leicester and the Earl of Sussex, for their visit to the Queen at Greenwich.

2. What did the Queen do about Sir Hugh Robsart's petition, which had been sent to her? How was the matter settled in the court at Greenwich?
3. Notice this sentence:

   Active voice: You must not worry about the cost.
   Passive voice: The cost is not to be worried about by you.
   Similarly change the following sentences from the active to the passive voice:
   (a) The Queen ordered a company of soldiers to camp outside the palace grounds.
   (b) Raleigh took charge of all the preparations.
   (c) Blount gave strict instructions to all the men not to quarrel with Leicester's men.
   (d) Exactly at noon, the bell tolled the hour.
   (e) The guards opened the palace gates.
   (f) The Queen ordered both the Earls to shake hands.
   (g) We have exchanged messages of love.
   (h) The Queen looked closely at Leicester.

Chapters 13 & 14

1. Why did Varney send Alasco to Cumnor Place?
2. Who was the pedlar? What was he doing at the Black Bear Inn?
3. What did Wayland Smith do to save Amy's life?
4. Change the following passage on page 56 into indirect or reported speech:

   From 'One day Leicester called Varney and asked what they should do.....' to '"there are sure to be others at court who know Amy."'
5. Notice the use of ——'s to show possession in the following sentences:—

   (a) These sad thoughts were disturbed by Varney's entry into the room.
   (b) I just don't know what saved the Earl of Sussex's life.
   (c) When he woke up, the Earl of Sussex was told about Dr Masters's visit.

   When the noun is in the plural -s' shows possession—e.g., soldiers' boots; girls' school; students' room:
   But note: children's pencils; men's shirts; women's handkerchieves.
   Rewrite the sentences given below by removing 'of' or 'belonging to' and using '-s or -s' to show possession.
   (a) The life of the Countess at Cumnor Place was very lonely.
   (b) The teacher took the exercise books of the children for correction
   (c) The bicycle belonging to Arvind was stolen.
   (d) The tools of the gardeners were left lying on the path.
   (e) The clothes of my sister were missing from the suitcase.

Chapters 15 & 16

1. What was Amy's reaction to the message brought by Varney, that for a short time, she should declare herself to be Varney's wife?
2. How did Janet help her mistress to escape? Why did she decide to continue to live at Cumnor Place herself?
3. Describe the meeting between Amy and Tressilian. Why was Amy in Tressilian's room?
4. Notice these words :
   dislike; (not to like).
   unfortunate; (not fortunate).
   The prefixes dis- and un- give a negative meaning to the words. Some common prefixes giving a negative or opposite meaning to words are:
   dis-; im-; un-; in-
   To the words given below, add the correct prefix to give the word a negative meaning:

	Negatives
(i) obey	
(ii) willing	
(iii) possible	
(iv) believe	
(v) happy	
(vi) honourable	
(vii) justice	
(viii) appear	
(ix) decided	
(x) perfect	
(xi) complete	
(xii) generous	

Make complex sentences from the pairs of simple sentences given below, using the word in brackets:

(a) Varney gave Amy her lord's command. Amy did not want to obey it. (Use 'which').

(b) The poison cannot harm you. You have been takir antidote. (Use 'because')
(c) Amy spoke to a servant. He was passing by. (Use 'wh
(d) Amy decided to remain quietly in the room. She waiting to receive Leicester's answer. (Use 'while').

Chapters 17 & 18

1. Describe Queen Elizabeth's arrival at Kenilworth.
2. What excuse did Varney give for Amy's absence from cc Why did this bring Tressilian into trouble with the Queen
3. Describe what happened when the Queen met Amy in the gr
4. Change the sentences given below from the passive to active voice.
   (a) As the Queen passed through the gates, a rocket was f by the guards.
   (b) The royal procession was lit by two hundred torches.
   (c) To welcome the Queen, warlike music was played musicians from the different towers.
   (d) Leicester was moved by the thoughtfulness and kindness his wife.
5. Make compound sentences from the pairs of simple senten given, using a suitable conjunction given in brackets:
   Note example: Leicester unbuckled his sword. On bended kn he presented it to the Queen. (Use 'and')
   Leicester unbuckled his sword and on bended knee present it to the Queen.
   (a) Amy was ill.
   She could not be present as ordered by the Queen. (Use 'so' or 'and').
   (b) Elizabeth's power as Queen was great.
   There were some things beyond even her control. (Use 'but'
   (c) Tressilian was shocked at the lies told to the Queen. H could do nothing because of his promise to Amy. (Us 'yet').
   (d) Give me twenty-four hours.
   I shall prove the certificate to be false. (Use 'and')
   (e) Queen Elizabeth drew the sword from its scabbard. She admired its beauty. (Use 'and').
   (f) Elizabeth thought that Amy was brain-sick.
   She thought Amy was telling lies. (Use 'either... or ...').
   (g) Amy spoke boldly.
   She looked helpless. (Use 'but').

Chapters 19 & 20

1. What was Amy's advice to her husband?
2. Varney told Leicester several lies about Amy. Mention of these lies. What purpose did they serve?
3. Describe Amy's departure from Kenilworth.

words opposite in meaning to the following :

Words	Opposites	Words	Opposites
ıte		timid	
ily		success	
ger		peaceful	
		truth	
hful		innocent	
ce		enter	

ters 21 & 22

hy did Leicester go to the Queen and declare his marriage to my?

What did Lord Burleigh mean when he said to the Queen, "I pray you, be calm. Do not let others guess what hey do not know." What effect did the words have on the Queen?

Change the passages given below into direct speech:

(i) When Leicester went to his room, he told a messenger to go and bring Varney. The messenger told him that Sir Richard Varney had left the Castle. He had gone an hour ago. He had taken three other persons with him.

Hearing this Leicester asked how Varney could leave after the gates were shut for the night.

The messenger replied that Sir Richard had given satisfactory reasons and had shown his lordship's signet-ring.

(ii) Tressilian told Leicester that he was known to be a person who respected honour and did not fear to die for it. So, he asked why Leicester had chosen to insult him the previous night. Leicester told him that if he did not like his scorn, then he should not waste any time or he would repeat the insult.

Tressilian eplied that that was not necessary and called upon God to judge between them. He also told Leicester that his blood, if he fell, would be on Leicester's own head.

(iii) Dickie told Tressilian that he had taken the letter out of mischief, because Wayland would not tell him who the lady was. Later he looked for Wayland everywhere, but he did not find him. He saw him only that morning. They were standing and talking when they saw Tressilian and Leicester leave the Castle and followed them. Dickie arrived just in time to save Tressi-n's life.

gin: Dickie said to Tressilian, "I took the letter ....)

ange the following compound sentences to complex (using words indicated in brackets) :